Hafa Adai!

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'Crimebuster' Maj. Edward Manalili set to retire. PAGE 2

Power generation is not the only problem—Muna. PAGE 5

Fitial to continue pressing for China, Russia visa waivers

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said that without the visa waivers for Chinese and Russian tourists, the CNMI economy will even be more severely impacted.

In an interview, Fitial vowed to continue asking the federal government for the inclusion of both China and Russia in the visa waiver program.

Fitial said they just received the draft regulations last Tuesday and he has assigned acting Attorney General Gregory Baka to look them over.

See FITIAL on Page 4

Matson cuts fuel surcharge again

Matson Navigation Co. will be lowering its fuel surcharge on Sunday for the sixth consecutive time, even as it announced plans to increase its shipping rates and terminal handling fee in February next year.

Matson's fee for its Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and Micronesia service will decrease by 4.5 percentage points to 16.5 percent from 21 percent.

It is also lowering its fuel surcharge by 4.5 percentage points to 15 percent from 19.5 percent for shipments between Hawaii and the mainland.

"Following an extended period in which oil costs hit historical record highs, we have been able to reduce Matson's fuel surcharge by 27.25 percentage

See MATSON on Page 4

A night of terror in Mumbai

By RAMOLA TALWAR BADAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MUMBAI, India (AP)—Western visitors and Mumbai residents ducked under tables at luxury five-star hotels as staff members locked restaurant doors at the first rattle of gunfire and explosions in the lobby below.

Not far away, army commandoes in battle-ready camouflage uniforms battled attackers in black shirts and jeans carrying shoulder bags filled with ammunition at Mumbai's main railway station, which was filled with commuters waiting to catch trains home.

Twelve hours after the first shots were fired at about 10 p.m. at a busy Mumbai cafe, the terror attacks continued Thursday

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RELATED NEWS

- Gunmen kill at least 101 in rampage across Mumbai. PAGE 22

Pigeons fly as the Taj Mahal Hotel continues to burn in Mumbai, India, Thursday, Nov. 27, 2008. AP

ON NATIONAL MARINE MONUMENT PROPOSAL

Micronesian chiefs to Bush: Back off!

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Micronesian leaders have asked President George W. Bush to reject a proposal to designate the three northernmost islands of the Commonwealth as a marine

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Esha

Fitial

Mori

Camacho

Tomeing

Anefal

Remengesau

Simina

OPINION METER

This week's poll:
On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the least and 5 the most, how safe and secure do you feel these days inside your home?

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59 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Homebound
Thousands are opting to stay home this Thanksgiving instead of going on costly trips to see loved ones.

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Gift-Giving
Want to keep the holiday crush under control without inciting a family riot?

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Local

‘Crimebuster’ Maj. Edward Manalili set to retire

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Police Maj. Edward H. Manalili, who has earned a reputation of being a “crimebuster,” is retiring early next year, mostly due to health reasons.

Manalili, the commander of the Department of Public Safety’s Criminal Investigation Division, is now on medical leave all the way to end of December and will be using his annual leave in January and February.

By the end of February or early March, the 50-year-old police major is expected to retire.

“I had a heart attack in early April of this year and I just got back from the Philippines where I had knee surgery. I think it’s about time that I take it easy and enjoy life a little bit more,” Manalili in an interview with *Saipan Tribune* during Wednesday’s blessing of the new CID and Traffic Section offices.

The police major has been serving in the department close to 20 years. He started his career at DPS as a police sergeant after a nine-year stint with the U.S. Marine Corps Military Police.

Manalili

DPS then tasked Manalili to put together the elite Tactical Response Enforcement Team. While running TRET, he was also assigned at the Special Investigation Unit, working on drugs and firearms.

“My heart is still with DPS especially CID…it is something that I enjoy. But like I said, for health reasons, I think I need to just step down and let the younger guys take the lead,” he said.

Manalili said that, from what he sees right now, Sgt. Sylvan Rangamar, the acting CID commander, is doing an “outstanding job.”

“Due to his [Rangamar’s] leadership, they were able to resolve the recent homicide and the recent rash of robberies,” Manalili said. “I am very proud of them. And I will continue to support them in what they are trying to accomplish.”

His advice to young police officers? To just stay focused on what they are going.

“If they love what they are doing, it doesn’t matter how rough the water gets. I think they will be able to keep their heads up and continue to move forward,” he said.

Manalili said being a police officer takes a lot of dedication.

“The work is hard. It doesn’t pay much. But as you can see, a lot of the officers continue to stay on and do what they do because of their dedication and the love of law enforcement,” he added.

Under his leadership at CIB, detectives conducted in September 2006 the department’s biggest roundup, with the arrest of 17 persons, including five juveniles, in its crackdown against people allegedly involved in burglary and theft cases on Saipan.

It was also the efforts of Manalili with the help of some officers that the DPS evidence room turned “high-tech.”

At Manalili’s request, the Federal Bureau of Investigation a few years ago turned over some of its vehicles to DPS and the Office of the Public Auditor.

TOOTBRUSH DONATION CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Crystal Edminister and the staff of Seventh Day Adventist Dental Clinic donated 300 toothbrushes to be sent to our deployed soldiers. They are seen donating the toothbrushes to Operation CNMI Home Front Support members. Packages will be assembled at the Army Reserve Center on Sunday, Nov. 30, beginning at 8:30am. The community is invited to participate.

Dear readers, advertisers and vendors of the *Saipan Tribune*,

Since August 2002, the *Saipan Tribune* has been proud to say that we are still the first and only media organization in the Northern Marianas that provides local news to our community seven days a week. Members of the *Tribune* team have been working every day to produce your community newspaper and keep you informed and entertained.

However, in today’s economic storm, even the strongest of businesses—and yes, even a healthy company like the *Saipan Tribune*—are impacted by the shrinking of the pie. Therefore, every business, large and small, every government entity, and even every family should take a look at efficiency and what it will take to survive the bottoming out of the economy.

As one of our own cost-cutting measures, effective November 30, we will temporarily suspend the Sunday newspaper until economic conditions in the CNMI improve. We sincerely hope this will be soon.

Although we will miss our Sunday comics and other features, we feel that the temporary reduction in the newspaper schedule from seven days to six only makes sense at this time. You have our assurance that if there’s a breaking story over the weekend that is of importance to the community, *Tribune* staff will continue to be there and you can read about it in our popular online edition at **“http://www.saipantribune.com.”**

On behalf of *Saipan Tribune*, thank you to all of our readers, vendors and advertisers. You have our commitment to continue to serve you as we weather this economic storm together.

Lynn Knight
Publisher
Saipan Tribune

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Report: Locals earned thrice more than aliens

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As a result of the large number of foreign workers in the CNMI, the economy developed a two-tiered structure, with the upper tier earning thrice more than the lower tier, according to an economic impact report released showing the impacts of federal regulations on the Commonwealth.

"The upper tier is [composed] of high-wage workers, most of which are U.S.-qualified residents employed in government and various private businesses," the report states. "The lower tier is [composed] of low-wage workers, most of which are foreign workers employed in the apparel and visitor industries."

The average annual labor income was $12,917 in 1995.

On average, foreign workers earned $7,792 per year, while local workers earned $24,423 per year—more than three times foreign workers, according to the report.

"While the incomes of foreign workers were well below the average income, they were high compared to what the workers would have earned back home," the report states.

U.S.-qualified residents' income, especially those employed in government, approached mainland standards at the time, the report says. The 5,020 government employees saw an annual average income of $28,650, about four-fifths of the income for workers in the United States, which averaged $34,690.

"Considering the CNMI's short history as a market economy and its geographical isolation, the high incomes of U.S.-qualified residents was a remarkable achievement," the report states.

According to the report, although the two-tier structures are very different, they are interdependent.

"Most U.S.-qualified residents owe their high-wage jobs to the apparel and visitors industries, which in turn rely on low-wage foreign workers," the report says.

Of the 7,710 people employed in the apparel industry in 1995, only 510 were U.S.-qualified residents.

"But, as a consequence of its indirect impact on the rest of the economy, the apparel industry supported an additional 1,750 jobs held by U.S.-qualified residents in the economy, including 990 jobs in government. Directly and indirectly, the visitor industry supported 5,940 jobs for U.S.-qualified residents in 1995," according to the report.

The apparel and visitor industries provided 8,200 jobs for U.S.-qualified residents, which represented 76.2 percent of the 10,760 jobs held by those residents in 1995.

"Thus, the loss of these two industries would have a calamitous effect on not only foreign workers but also on local workers in the CNMI," the report states.

Malcolm D. McPhee & Associates and Dick Conway produced the economic impact report. The Office of the Governor commissioned the report with a grant from the Office of Insular Affairs.

Navy ship *Reuben James* visits Saipan

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

The U.S. Navy vessel USS *Reuben James* is currently on Saipan for a five-day rest-and-recreation stop, allowing its crew a chance to visit some of the island's tourist spots and historical sites.

Ruth Coleman, executive director of the Military and Veterans Affairs Office, said the ship arrived on Monday and will leave today for its homeport in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

The frigate's commander is Commodore Joseph Naman.

Coleman said there are over 200 Navy officers on board.

"They are here for R&R and will be back today for homeport," Coleman said.

According to Wikipedia, the ship was commissioned in 1986. She travels faster than 30 knots (30 mph/60 km/h) and is powered by two gas turbine engines.

The frigate is armed with anti-air and anti-ship missiles, an automated three-inch (76 mm) gun, an anti-missile defense system, and two SH-60 Seahawk anti-submarine helicopters.

Reuben James was tasked with hunting submarines as well as battle group escort and maritime interception. *Reuben James* joined the Red Stallions of Destroyer Squadron Thirty-One in June 1987.

Assigned to Mideast Force on her maiden deployment, *Reuben James* participated in 21 Operation Earnest Will convoy missions, serving as the convoy commander's flagship on 10 of those missions.

As a unit of the Pacific Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare Readiness Squadron, she was a key participant in the continuing research and development of anti-submarine tactics and equipment.

The ship has participated in several missions around Asia, the Persian Gulf and even in Russia and other European countries.

In 2000, the ship was part of the CARAT exercises, including phases in the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore.

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More Pacific countries to test for silent sexual infection

NOUMEA, New Caledonia—Earlier this year, Cook Islands, Nauru and the Solomon Islands successfully piloted a new screening program for chlamydia. Now, eight more Pacific Island countries and territories—Tonga, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Tuvalu—are beginning a program to screen for and treat the silent sexual infection chlamydia.

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection in the Pacific Islands region, particularly among young people. Up to 20 percent of people aged 15–30 may be infected, and recent surveys show that in some countries, chlamydia prevalence rates are higher than 29 percent among pregnant women.

"Chlamydia is transmitted through unprotected sex and can lead to infertility and infection of babies during delivery. Yet most people who test positive for chlamydia don't have any signs or symptoms," said Dr Anna McNulty, STI Advisor for the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

The pilot screening programs in the Cook Islands, Solomons and Nauru included testing for another STI, gonorrhea, and received technical support from SPC and funding from the Asian Development Bank. The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will fund the extension of the program to seven of these countries as well as its full implementation in the Cook Islands, Nauru and Solomon Islands. The testing program in Fiji will be funded by NZAID, New Zealand's International AID and Development Agency.

Chlamydia is easy to test for and does not require any physical examination, only one urine sample. It is also easy to treat with a single dose of antibiotics. However, partners also need to be treated to prevent re-infection.

Most men and women have no symptoms and are unaware that they are infected. However, signs in women may include vaginal discharge and lower abdominal pain; symptoms in men may include pain, stinging and burning when urinating, and/or a discharge from the penis.

"Our goal is to test young people who have sex and have no symptoms but who could be infected and do not know it," said Dr McNulty. "We would also like to see testing being targeted at people who are not usually able to access testing and treatment, such as sex workers and seafarers."

Chlamydia and gonorrhea increase the risk of HIV transmission. The best protection against STIs is proper use of a condom during sex. ***(SPC)***

MATH COURT WINNERS

Congratulations to "The Mighty Tottot" students of Dandan Elementary School for winning the Math Court competitions.

October 11, 2008 Winners

Algebra Division
First Place:
Riyanna Camacho-Kinder
Jayvier Mendiola-1st Grade
Jolo Miko Berueco-3rd Grade
Joshua Mendiola-4th Grade

Second Place:
Codie Escota-Kinder
Domingo Aguon-Kinder
Jobelle Tabuena-2nd Grade
Jacob Teregeyo-2nd Grade
John Christina Piring-4th Grade
Orlando Santos-5th Grade

Third Place:
Moses Del Avellano-Kinder
Kaleolani Kani-Kinder
Terrel Sablan-1st Grade
Wong Jong Seo-5th Grade
Bernadette You-5th Grade

Fourth Place:
Charlie McEntee-4th Grade

Number Sense:

First Place:
Jacob Teregeyo-2nd Grade

Second Place:
Abel DL Guerrero-1st Grade
Jayvier Mendiola-1st Grade
Min Seok-3rd Grade
Ivan Seo-4th Grade
Joaquin Teregeyo-4th Grade

Third Place:
Toa Pangelinan-Kinder
Donaven DLGuerrero-1st Grade
Jolo Berueco-3rd Grade
Franco Masga-3rd Grade
Joshua Reyes-3rd Grade
Chamaine Ebilane-4th Grade
Joshua Mendiola-4th Grade

Fourth Place:
Matthew Kapileo-3rd Grade

6th-12thDivision:
Stephanie Espayos-2nd Place-Numbers
Joshua Mostales-1st Place-Numbers&Algebra
Nipi Laniyo-3rd Place-Numbers
Danica Domingo-4th Place-Numbers
5th Place-Algebra

November 08, 2008 Winners

Geometry & Measurement

First Place:
Toa Pangelinan-Kinder
Codie Escota-Kinder
Abel DLGuerrero-1st Grade
Jacob Teregeyo-2nd Grade
Jolo Miko Berueco-3rd

Second Place:
Kaleolani Kani-Kinder
Jayvier Mendiola-1st Grade
Donaven DLGuerrero-1st Grade
Joshua Mendiola-4th Grade
Orlando Santos-5th Grade
Kyle Flores-5th Grade
Martin Kapileo-5th Grade
Won Jong Seo-5th Grade

Third Place:
Jerwin Mendiola-Kinder
Cybil Reigh-1st Grade
Rochelle Ebilane-2nd Grade
Collins Flores-3rd Grade
Matthew Kapileo-3rd Grade
Ninfa Rabago=3rd Grade

Fourth Place:
Trinae Manglona-2nd

Data, Statistics & Probability

First Place:
Donaven DLGuerrero-1st Grade
Jacob Teregeyo-2nd Grade
Ivan Seo-4th Grade

Second Place:
Jolo Miko Berueco-3rd Grade
Joshua Mendiola-4th Grade
Orlando Santos-5th Grade
Jose Rabago-5th Grade
Martin Kapielo-5th Grade

Third Place:
Jayvier Mendiola-1st Grade
Won Jong Seo-5th Place

6th-12thDivision:

Data, Statistics & Probability
1st Place-Joshua Mostales
2nd Place-Danica Domingo
Meihong Jin
3rd Place- Jared Ayuyu

Geometry & Measurement
1st Place-Danica Domingo
2nd Place-Stephanie Espanos
4th Place- Jared Ayuyu

MATSON

From Page 1

points in a relatively short time frame," said Dave Hoppes, Matson senior vice president of ocean services. "We are hopeful this current trend will continue, resulting in further decreases."

Most customers will see a reduction in shipping costs ranging from $110 to $170 per container under the latest decrease. Most customers have seen a decrease in shipping costs ranging from $640 to $1,015 as a result of the overall reduction since September.

Matson's last adjustment to its fuel surcharge was on Nov. 16 when it lowered the rate by 5.5 percentage points for its Hawaii, Guam/CNMI and Micronesia services.

Matson had announced Wednesday that it will raise its rates for the company's Guam/CNMI service by $120 per westbound and eastbound container, effective Feb. 1 next year. The NMI rate increase applies to Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

Matson will also raise its West Coast terminal handling charge by $175 for both westbound and eastbound containers, also effective Feb. 1, 2009.

Matson will also implement a new crane surcharge of $125 per container, which is designed to help recover costs associated with the purchase and operation of three gantry cranes in Guam; the new charge will be implemented in March 2009, when the cranes have started operations.

The increase will be filed with the Surface Transportation Board. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

MICRONESIAN

From Page 1

monument.

The officials, in a letter signed at the recently concluded 10th Micronesian Chief Executives' Summit in Pohnpei, expressed their support for the CNMI government, which opposes the implementation of a national marine monument in the islands of Maug, Asuncion and Uracas through the Antiquities Act.

"While the merits of the specific designation are debatable, the process is unacceptable to all of our people," states the letter, signed by Federated States of Micronesia President Emanuel Mori, Guam Gov. Felix Camacho, Palau President Tommy E. Remengasau, Marshall Islands President Litokwa Tomeing, Yap Gov. Sebastian Anefal, Pohnpei Gov. John Ehsa, Kosrae Gov. Robert Weilbacher, Chuuk Gov. Wesley Simina, and Northern Marianas Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

"Based on our experience," the letter adds, "protected areas are only successful when they reflect the will and ideals of those affected. Mr. President, we ask that you refrain from designating any national marine monument in the CNMI against the wishes of the indigenous peoples of those island. These wishes are also strongly demonstrated through the voices of the vast majority of [the] CNMI's democratically elected leaders opposing any national marine monument designation."

The letter was written at Fitial's request. The governor, in his opening remarks at the Chief Executives Summit, called the marine monument proposal "[a] challenge for the CNMI."

He said, "This is a plan that has been rejected by the government of the CNMI and by elected leaders in Guam.... I believe that we have already voluntarily committed to the [Palau government-led] Micronesian Challenge and that we can preserve our own environment and natural resources without undue interference from wealthy, influential groups and bureaucrats from Washington, D.C."

The Fitial administration and the Legislature has repeatedly stated—through official communications to the Bush administration and in meetings with White House officials—their opposition to the monument proposal.

Yet a local organization, Friends of the Monument, with backing from the multibillion-dollar Pew Charitable Trusts, has been aggressive in pushing for the marine preservation plan. Last month, the group submitted over 5,000 signatures collected by more than 60 volunteers in support of the marine monument.

"It represents one of the largest one-on-one information and outreach efforts ever undertaken in the CNMI and represents literally thousands of individual conversations. We do not believe that this sort of grassroots democracy should be discounted," the group has said of the effort.

A NIGHT

From Page 1

inside two of the city's best-known and most opulent hotels where terrorists still held hostages.

"We were at dinner when we heard shots fired. There was gunfire and explosions. We stayed on the floor, many were lying under tables, under furniture, and the hotel staff told us to be quiet," said Cheryl Robinson, a British tourist who was trapped inside Mumbai's Taj Mahal hotel with two friends. "The hotel staff were stupendous. They locked the doors and warned us to sit tight."

She said restaurants and rooms were flooded with water after a pipe burst in the chaos of the gunshots and blasts. "We lay down in the water. We could hear the sound of people running outside. It was terrifying."

Seven long hours later, a barefoot Robinson shivered as she stood outside the burning but still majestic stone-columned hotel that belched out black smoke from shattered windows. Soldiers and firefighters helped her and several others to climb down ladders and escape the blazing edifice as the firing continued inside.

A clutch of weeping tourists from Spain, Italy and Britain, also barefoot, huddled together holding bottles of water and haversacks. They waved away journalists eager for news.

At another Mumbai landmark, the Chattrapati Shivaji Terminus railway station, Nasim Inam's hands shook as he spoke of seeing commuters mowed down while walking to catch the late trains home.

Four young men carrying big guns and wearing black T-shirts and blue jeans rushed in, Inam said. "They just fired randomly at people and then ran away. In seconds, people fell to the ground."

Sobbing and shaking his head, he said the attackers were 25 years old at the most.

"They were so young. They were young boys," said Inam. "I was standing behind. I was just behind. If they had turned around, it would have been me."

Just a few miles (kilometers) away, eyewitnesses said gunmen hijacked a police van then opened fire on crowds that had collected near two hospitals close to the police headquarters.

"We felt the ground shake and heard the explosions," said Manish Tripathi, at a police cordon near one of the hospitals. "We heard a car speed up behind us, it was a police van, but the men inside were firing at us."

He said in seconds people around him were shot at. "Men were screaming that they had lost their fingers. There was blood all over," said Tripathi who escaped unhurt. "Some were shot in the leg, some on the shoulder or hand. I feel they are still screaming."

Inside the two Mumbai hotels and the railway station, green uniformed soldiers in helmets took over from the khaki-uniformed police who moved out to patrol the streets and warned residents to stay indoors.

The state government has ordered schools and colleges closed Thursday.

Opposite the multistory Oberoi hotel, a tense college student Preet Desai paced on a deserted promenade as dawn broke. He said a friend's father was inside the hotel at a business meeting when shots were fired.

"My friend is shattered. His dad is not answering his cell. What do we do?" said Desai. "Do you know anyone in the hotel who can give us information, any information?"

FITIAL

From Page 1

The governor said they are going to meet again with the Saipan Chamber of Commerce to discuss the things that need to be done as far as their comments to the draft regulations are concerned.

"But we need to submit our comments after we have thoroughly reviewed the draft regulations," he emphasized.

According to the semiannual regulatory plan issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, visitors from China and Russia "cannot, at this time, seek admission under the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program due to security concerns."

Under current local rules, tourists from Russia and China can visit the CNMI without first securing a U.S. visa.

The DHS' regulatory plan indicates that, despite the significant economic benefits, this policy will have to change when the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program, as provided in the new immigration law, goes into effect in June 2009.

Fitial said that if that draft regulations for the non-inclusion of China and Russia are adopted, the CNMI might be submitting its own bailout package.

"There's no way we can survive under the proposal, not only under federal immigration law but also the regulations," he pointed out.

Power generation is not the only problem—Muna

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Although power generation remains a major concern for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., there are other areas that need to be addressed, said CUC executive director Antonio Muña.

"We focus on power generation because that's where the lightning rod of attention is focused," he said. "When the power goes out, it immediately impacts thousands of homes, thousands of people… here on Saipan."

But there are still families that don't have water, he added.

"That doesn't get into the front lines," he said.

Muña said CUC is trying to stabilize water distribution, but the utility company needs more water pumps.

"We're short on pumps," he said. "How do you get more pumps? You need revenue for that."

Sewage lines remain a problem as well, Muña said.

People continue to pour grease into sewage, causing sewage to back up.

"It's not because the system isn't working," he said. "It's because people put things in the sewage pipes that shouldn't be put in there."

But in order to fix the problem, a special type of equipment must be used.

"Do we have that equipment? No. We need to get that equipment, otherwise we're just doing things manually," he said.

He added that sewage pipes need to be replaced because, in some cases, there is no pipe left. A form has been molded, pushing the sewage through without the pipe, he said.

He said the company also is dealing with power transmission and distribution issues.

In Gov. Benigno Fitial's state of disaster emergency for CUC, he directs the utility company to procure as soon as possible the goods and services necessary to repair a transformer that feeds the southern side of the island. CUC can't get the necessary warranty work done on a back-up transformer that feeds the Chalan Kiya distribution transformer because it still owes the supplier $180,000, according to the declaration.

"Everything demands a dollar," Muña said. If things had been maintained properly, CUC could pay for necessary repairs, but because things were not properly maintained the dollar amount for ordinary repairs is higher, he added.

"It's a process that if we had the money already, we'd be well on our way," he said, "but we have to go through the process to secure the funding, because there's no money coming from the register. And that's no secret."

Senate OKs bill expanding role of nurses

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate has passed a bill expanding the duties of local nurses, in a bid to increase access to health care in the Commonwealth.

The bill cleared the Upper House by unanimous vote earlier this week and is now with the House of Representatives for a similar approval. It will become law once passed by the Lower House and signed by the governor.

The legislation proposes to increase the autonomy of advanced practice nurses and thus put them on the front lines for delivering health care services.

Currently, advanced practice registered nurses can only treat patients with a supervising physician. The Senate Committee on Health and Welfare Programs, which reviewed and recommended passage of the bill, notes that, because of the shortage of physicians, health care on the islands, especially Rota and Tinian, "can, and has been, severely disrupted to the point of nonexistence."

According to the committee, advanced practice registered nurses must undergo extensive training in order to be licensed in the United States and the Commonwealth. The committee also notes that nurse practitioners are increasingly being used as alternative health care providers in many rural areas in the United States. At least 12 jurisdictions—Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, District of Columbia, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming—require absolutely no physician involvement with the prescribing aspect of nurse practitioners' practices.

"[T]he availability of professionally trained and educated local nurse practitioners who can provide quality health care services, will improve access to quality health care in the commonwealth if current restrictions are relaxed," the committee said.

'Get going on infra projects for Saipan'

The House of Representatives has urged the Department of Public Works to move fast on locally funded infrastructure projects for Saipan.

In a resolution, the House members told DPW Secretary Diego Songsong "to be innovative and accommodating when expediting these projects and in consultation with the respective precinct representatives."

The lawmakers noted that although funding has been provided, many road paving, facility renovations, and other public facility improvements have yet to be completed, or even started.

They said road projects in particular should be completed immediately, as the CNMI government spends huge amounts of money every year fixing coral roads. The paving of coral roads and installing drainage systems on such roads, the legislators said, will significantly reduce the amount of funds spent on continuous repairs and improve the island's infrastructure.

The House members also cited the economic impact of infrastructure development. "With the current state of the CNMI's economy, it is necessary to ensure that money for capital improvement projects are spent to spur the local economy," they said. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

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Has your father or brother had a heart attack before age 55, OR has your mother or sister had one before age 65?			
Do you have diabetes OR a fasting blood sugar of 126 mg/dL or higher, OR do you need medicine to control your blood sugar?			
Are you over 55 years old?			
Do you have a body mass index (BMI) score of 25 or more?			
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To learn more, visit www.hearttruth.gov

Source: The Healthy Heart Handbook for Women, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (2007).

To learn more, please call the Division of Public Health – Wise Women Project at 234-8950 ext. 2141

The Wise Women Project is federally funded by the US DHHS Office on Women's Health ASIST2010 Initiative.

Man in can insurance scam gets 30 days

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Superior Court handed down a 30-day prison term on a man who was among several persons involved in a car insurance scam.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman sentenced Xin Mao Zheng, alias Amao, to three years in prison, all suspended except for 30 days, for theft by deception.

Wiseman gave Zheng credit for the time he has already served in jail and placed him under two years of supervised probation.

The judge required Zheng to fully cooperate in the prosecution of his co-conspirators.

The defendant was ordered to pay restitution to be determined by the court, a $500 fine, $100 court assessment fee, plus a probation fee.

Wiseman directed Zheng to write a letter of apology to the victim, AON Insurance Micronesia (Saipan).

The defendant was told to present himself at the Department of Corrections on Dec. 3 at 8am to start his prison term.

In July 2008, the Attorney General's Office filed an amended information charging Zheng with one count of conspiracy, and two counts of theft by deception.

The defendant and counsel Vicente T. Salas signed a plea agreement with the government, represented by special assistant attorney general Joseph J. Przyuski.

Zheng pleaded guilty to one count of theft by deception. The AGO agreed to dismiss the remaining charges.

According to the plea agreement, on March 14, 2008, Zheng submitted a false police report and falsified documents in support of a fraudulent insurance claim to AON Insurance. He received a check from the company in the amount of $6,870.

Police arrested Zheng and Yuan Fu Li, both of Shun Fa Auto Shop in Koblerville, for their reported involvement in the car insurance scam.

Detective Patrick Earl Maanao stated in his report that the arrest of Zheng and Li was made after Serafin Esperancilla, who was earlier arrested because of the scam, confessed to police his participation and implicated the two defendants.

Maanao said Sgt. Hillary Tagabuel, who was also charged in the scam earlier, admitted forging a total of 41 traffic crash reports (TCRs).

Maanao said Tagabuel stated that most of the TCRs he prepared last year was for his co-defendant, Yu Jai Feng "Lili" Cepeda and that he started dealing with Esperancilla last January.

The detective said that during interviews with operators or owners of some vehicles mentioned in the forged TCRs, many were unaware that their vehicles were involved in accidents.

Based on testimony of some operators or owners of the vehicles, the investigators learned that defendants Zheng and Li were using the vehicles in the fake accident claims.

In this scam, AON Insurance paid for the repair of the vehicles to the auto shop.

Police earlier disclosed that three insurance companies, including Century Insurance, were victims in this scam.

Maanao said that under the scheme, the average payout by the insurance companies were anywhere between $8,000 to $25,000 per traffic crash report.

'Protocols for PSS security need to be established'

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

In light of the recent murder of a security guard at Marianas High School, Education Commissioner Rita Sablan said she is going to look into security regulations for the Public School System.

Sablan said she would learn more about the industry expectation for security companies.

"It's important [that] not only property is protected but also individuals are protected," she said.

Protocols need to be established for when PSS contracts with private security companies, she said.

Three MHS students, Eric Rabauliman, 18; Edward Blas, 16; and Randy Anthony Igisomar, 16, were charged this week with murder in the first degree for the killing of Efren L. Ballesteros, a security guard at MHS. Ballesteros was employed with Global Security, which has contracts with several other public schools.

The three suspects allegedly sneaked up on Ballesteros from behind as he was lying on the concrete bench along the hallway and attacked him with a piece of wood, pipe and rebar. The suspects then allegedly stole Ballesteros money and wristwatch before stealing items from classrooms.

21 artists to join holiday sale this weekend

A total of 21 artists have so far confirmed to participate in the 4th Annual Holiday Artists' Sale, to be held at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe this weekend.

The two-day activity will start at 10am until 7pm on Saturday (Nov. 29) and 10am until 5pm on Sunday (Nov. 30).

On the participants' list are some of the island's noted artists like painter Joe Kani (watercolor, acrylic), NMI Museum director Robert Hunter, book author Joe Race, Rino Obar, Greg Elliott, and the young and promising Hermes Diaz.

The others are Debbie Winkfield, Tokie Mojiko, Laura Williams, Chris Kapileo, CC Longfield, Saimon Rayphand, Jill Arenovski, Irineo David, Rayo Christian, Rose Diaz, Kate Fuller, Catherine Anderson, and John Davis.

One of the artists who helped organized the event, Jeanne Rayphand, said four more interested participants have called to reserve a space.

Rayphand, legal counsel of the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc., said this event is a way for artists to come together to talk and share their craft.

"Just come and look to discover the talents of local artists," Rayphand urged.

The artists will be selling their products such as visual arts painting, jewelry, baskets, books and other art crafts.

The $25 fee for a space or $40 for two spaces will be used to pay for use of the Multi-Purpose Center and advertising expenses.

Katharyn Tuten-Puckett is also coordinating the activity.

Rayphand said this is not a fundraising activity and the artists will retain all money received from their sales.

Rayphand said the Student Honor Society of Marianas High School would be having a fundraising by selling foods in front of the center.

Food items will not be allowed inside the center.

Last year's activity showed a good turnout, with the over 20 artists participating. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

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Man convicted of beating man over missing cow

A man was convicted of assault and battery after he beat up a man over a missing cow in Kagman III.

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona accepted defendant Herman I. Somorang Jr.'s guilty plea to assault and battery.

Manglona sentenced the 40-year-old Somorang to one year in prison, all suspended except for eight days.

Manglona gave the defendant credit for the time he has already served in jail and placed him under one year probation.

The judge ordered Somorang to pay a $500 fine, a $25 court assessment fee, and a $100 annual probation service fee.

She also required the defendant to pay restitution in an amount to be determined by the Probation Office.

The Attorney General's Office charged Somorang with assault and battery, and assault with a dangerous weapon.

The defendant and counsel Joaquin DLG Torres signed the plea agreement. For pleading guilty to assault and battery, the AGO agreed to dismiss the remaining charge that was subsequently reduced to the lesser included offense of assault and battery.

The plea agreement stated that on April 12, 2008, Somorang struck Joey Mendiola Jr. in the face, causing injuries.

Detective Peter A. Aldan stated in his report that the assault happened when Somorang arrived at the residence of Mendiola in Koblerville 111.

The defendant asked Mendiola where his cow was, but the latter responded that he does not know anything about a cow.

Somorang went under a mango tree where he called Mendiola to approach him and asked him again about his cow.

When Mendiola again denied knowing anything about the cow, Somorang punched him in the jaw. The defendant then picked up a rock the size of a softball.

Mendiola ran to his residence, but the defendant chased him and threw the rock at him.

The victim was hit on the right ear, right temple and right cheek. He sustained a small laceration in the right ear, and bruising and swelling on the right temple. He also had small puncture wound on the right cheek.

Somorang then ran toward his truck and sped away. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

JOINT BIRTHDAY REY BELGADO

RC Relucio celebrates his ninth birthday, while Rizza Relucio marks her second birthday during a joint celebration held Nov. 22, 2008, at Canton Restaurant. The two birthday celebrants are the children of Rommel and Luz Relucio.

Learn how to add value to your food

The Northern Marianas College Cooperate Research, Extension and Education Service is inviting all CNMI farmers, homemakers, and other interested individuals to a free, two-day "Value Added Processing and Food Safety" workshop to be held at Kagman Community Center, Dec. 2-3, starting at 9:30am until 4pm. Dr. Jang H. Kim and Felix Calvo will facilitate the two-day workshop.

Participants will learn about food safety and preservation, processing of home-made food canning, and finally value-added food processing on the first day of the workshop. On the second day, Kim and Calvo will demonstrate the making of jams and pickles, and will provide time for a Q&A session, including consultation to interested participants.

"This workshop is designed to help the public achieve a better understanding of food safety, and understand the value in savings from processing foods at home," said Kim, who points out that homemade jams and pickles help prevent the waste of food.

Farmers and producers especially profit from food processing, as this gives their produce an added value. By using the processing method, farmers are not pressed to sell their fruits and vegetables picked fresh from the field, but can take advantage of the extended shelf life of jams and pickles and sell their produce long after it was harvested.

Kim is the Food Scientist at NMC-CREES, and his expertise is development of new food products and food safety. He received his Ph.D. from Mississippi State University and has worked in food science area for many years in the United States and Korea. Calvo is an agriculture consultant for NMC CREES.

The same workshop will be offered on Tinian on Dec. 4 and 5, and Rota on Dec. 10 and 11 at the respective NMC instructional sites. For more information, interested parties can call NMC-CREES at 234-5498 ext. 1705/07/08. ***(PR)***

Telesource marks 1 million safe work hours on embassy project

Local and overseas workers representing Telesource SHBC (Fiji), Ltd. and their subcontractor Fletcher Construction at the new American Embassy complex site in Tamavua, Suva, are celebrating a truly remarkable achievement: a million work hours without any disabling injury.

Project Director Tracy Thomas for the U.S. Department of States Overseas Buildings Operations stated that this safety milestone is a direct result of the contractor's commitment to health and safety awareness as well as practices.

Based on statistics from the Fiji Labour Ministry's Health and Safety at Work Act, this is the first time a project has reached this record on any construction projects in Fiji.

Telesource chief executive officer Nidal Zayed said that safety is Telesource's most important core value and this team was doing an exemplary job.

"We will focus even more so now and ensure our record is preserved and more importantly that all site personnel remain safe and out of harm's way," he said.

Once completed, the more than $30 million project will encompass a 4.3-hectare compound hosting a state-of-the-art embassy facility set in a lush garden with both American and local design elements, providing 4,600 square meters of safe, secure, and functional office space. ***(PR)***

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Christmas lights to be turned on today

The CNMI Christmas Tree and Light Sculptures will be illuminated today, 6pm, to officially usher in the holiday season on the islands.

The CNMI Christmas Tree stands in front of the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe, while over 40 light sculptures stand alongside roadways throughout Saipan. The project, spearheaded by Lt. Gov. Tim Villagomez's wife, Margaret Keene-Villagomez, aims to spread yuletide cheer for both residents and visitors, alike.

"A number of businesses have again contributed to make this year's Christmas projects possible," said Keene-Villagomez. "We invite the community to enjoy this tradition as we celebrate the holidays with this simple, yet meaningful, reminder of the hope that this time of the year traditionally brings." ***(PR)***

3 lots set for auction on Friday, 2 more next

The Commonwealth Development Authority announced this week three lots that are scheduled for auction at 2pm this Friday, Nov. 28, at the CDA's conference Room.

The Superior Court issued the notice of action on Oct. 20 in Civil Action No. 04-0482A (CDA vs. Plastag Enterprises, Inc, the State of Plasido M. Tagabuel, Doris Tagabuel and John Henry I. Tagabuel).

The properties are located on Capital Hill, in Chalan Laulau and Kagman with no minimum opening bid required.

The auction shall be held with reserve.

The Department of Public Safety was assigned as the auctioneer.

Two other properties are scheduled for auction on Dec. 19, including one in San Jose, Tinian, and in a tract and lot in San Vicente, Saipan.

The lot on Tinian has an area of 1,476 square meters, including all existing and permanent improvements on the real property, all improvements, appurtenances and easements. The notice of auction in civil action No. 03-0414C was issued by the Superior Court on Nov. 21.

The property in San Vicente has 2,041 square meters for the tract and 2,000 square meters for the lot. The notice of auction for this property was issued by the court on Nov. 21 in Civil Action No. 97-341 .

There is no minimum bid for both properties.

According to the auction notice, a deposit of 10 percent of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the sale. The remaining balance is due within 10 days of the auction sale. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

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The promotional prize draws will occur at 10am on Friday 21st November 2008, Friday 12th December 2008 and Wednesday 31st Dec 2008. The Grand Prize Draw will occur at 10am on Friday 9th January, 2009. Draws will be held at the Western Union location at Mita Travel Beach Road Garapan, Saipan, and are open to the public to attend.

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Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Novmber 28, 2000

House OKs tax breaks

Legislation granting tax breaks to new investments as well as present businesses with expansion plans is now before the office of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio after the lower house yesterday accepted amendments made by the Senate. Proponents urged the local chief executive to immediately act on the measure to pave the way for mostly foreign investors to open new businesses as well as to expand existing establishments. HB 12-199, otherwise known as the "Investment Incentive Act," seeks to provide tax relief to businesses under a qualifying certificate program administered by the Commonwealth Development Authority.

NMHC sees spike in housing program applicants

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation is anticipating an increase in the number of applicants to a public housing program following President Clinton's signing into law of legislation that makes citizens of the Freely Associated States eligible for Section-8 benefits. Housing Executive Director Marylou S. Ada said the expected increase in the number of applicants for the Section-8 Housing Program will come from citizens of Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia who have migrated to the CNMI. Ms. Ada disclosed more than 150 families are currently on the waiting list of the federally-funded Public Housing Assistance Program, with majority of the applicants wanting to avail of the NMHC-administered units.

November 28, 2001

NMC faces student retention woes

A pioneering study conducted to improve student retention at the Northern Marianas College affirmed that the public institution is faced with student retention woes somewhat similar to other US two-year colleges. The NMC's Institutional Effectiveness, in a report, was able to note a 55 percent student withdrawal rate from Fall 2000 to Spring 2001, several points higher than the 47 percent dropout rate based on national norms. The study also reflects a 45 percent student retention rate, solely based on the figures taken from the two regular semesters. This means that out of 944 students who enrolled at the end of Fall last year, 424 returned to take NMC courses in the following Spring semester.

Verizon, Citadel finalizing deal

Verizon Communications and a consortium of investors led by Citadel Holdings, Inc. are expected to officially close the sale of Micronesian Telecommunications Inc. in the first quarter of 2002. Ownership of MTC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Verizon Communications, will be transferred to the consortium of Citadel, Tan Holdings Corporation and other investors. The terms of the transaction were not disclosed. According to Verizon Group Vice President for International Asset Management John Doherty, the sale is contingent upon the approval by the Federal Communications Commission and the Commonwealth Telecommunications Commission on Saipan.

November 28, 2002

Community urged to fight substance abuse

Gov. Juan N. Babauta yesterday urged the community to recommit itself to overall efforts that are aimed at increasing public awareness and understanding on the ills of substance abuse. Babauta issued this statement yesterday after signing a proclamation that declared December as Mental Health and Substance Abuse Awareness Month. The Governor underscored the need for the community to remain sensitive to the needs of individuals who may be at risk of alcohol and substance abuse or suicide.

Cabrera defends MPLA abolition measure

House Rep. Gloria DLC. Cabrera belied talks that she introduced the bill to abolish the Marianas Public Land Authority out of "retaliation" to the MPLA Board's termination of the agency's commissioner. "I suppose that the timing of it does little to assure the people that it has nothing to do with the termination of the former commissioner. But I have not spoken with the former commissioner to date. Nor have I made any effort to contact her," Cabrera told reporters Tuesday. At the same time, the congresswoman denied that the administration "pressured" her into bringing the legislation to the House floor during Friday's session.

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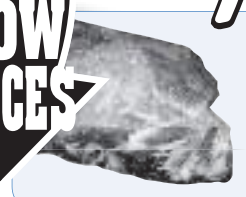

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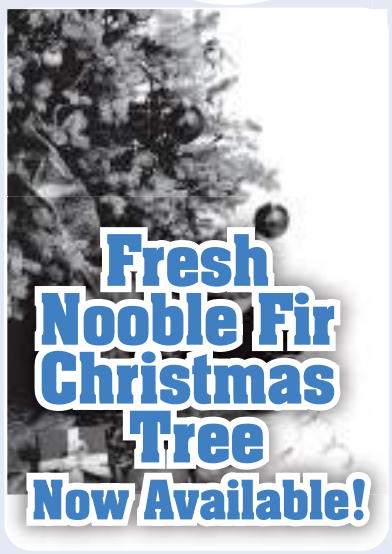

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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Checklist for the economy

Less than a day after the federal government rode to another bank's rescue, President-elect Barack Obama confirmed his intent to raise the ante on the Bush administration's intervention in the economy. Obama held a short news conference Monday to introduce his top economic advisers, including New York Federal Reserve chief Timothy F. Geithner (Obama's pick for Treasury secretary) and former Treasury Secretary Lawrence H. Summers (his choice for director of the National Economic Council). The two represented, if not the opposite poles of policy, at least a very different set of constituents: On Obama's right stood Geithner, who has helped funnel huge sums of tax dollars to troubled financial institutions, and on his left stood Summers, who wants Washington to spend an extraordinary amount on another stimulus package.

This two-pronged approach is appropriate. As the precipitous decline of Citigroup Inc. demonstrated, deep problems linger in the financial industry and will continue to do so until lenders scrub vast numbers of bad loans and related financial instruments from their books. Yet those troubles feed and are fed by the contraction in the economy at large. Hence the support even among some conservative economists for more deficit spending to revive growth. Put it all together and it spells, well, not free-market capitalism, but not socialism either. Call it a marriage of Keynesian economics and the hold-your-nose interventionism practiced lately by Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson.

But the new administration needs to do more than just broaden its focus beyond Wall Street. It needs to come up with a better rationale for when and when not to intervene in the market. Washington has increasingly acted as the insurer of last resort for the financial industry, sweeping in with a variety of rescues whenever a large institution's slide threatens a significant number of its business partners. By that faulty logic, there's no reason not to provide a bailout to any other supplicant with a large network of suppliers and investors, such as Detroit's automakers.

Obama's team needs to establish principles that clearly connect the aid supplied, the conditions imposed and the benefit to taxpayers. The same argument applies to efforts to stimulate the economy. Unlike the $168-billion package Congress approved in February, whose income-tax rebates provided a short-lived spike in spending, the new administration's plan needs a disciplined focus on boosting productivity and sustainable job growth. And it needs to send a clear message to the markets that Washington will play a limited and predictable role, rather than being the risk takers' rescuer on call.

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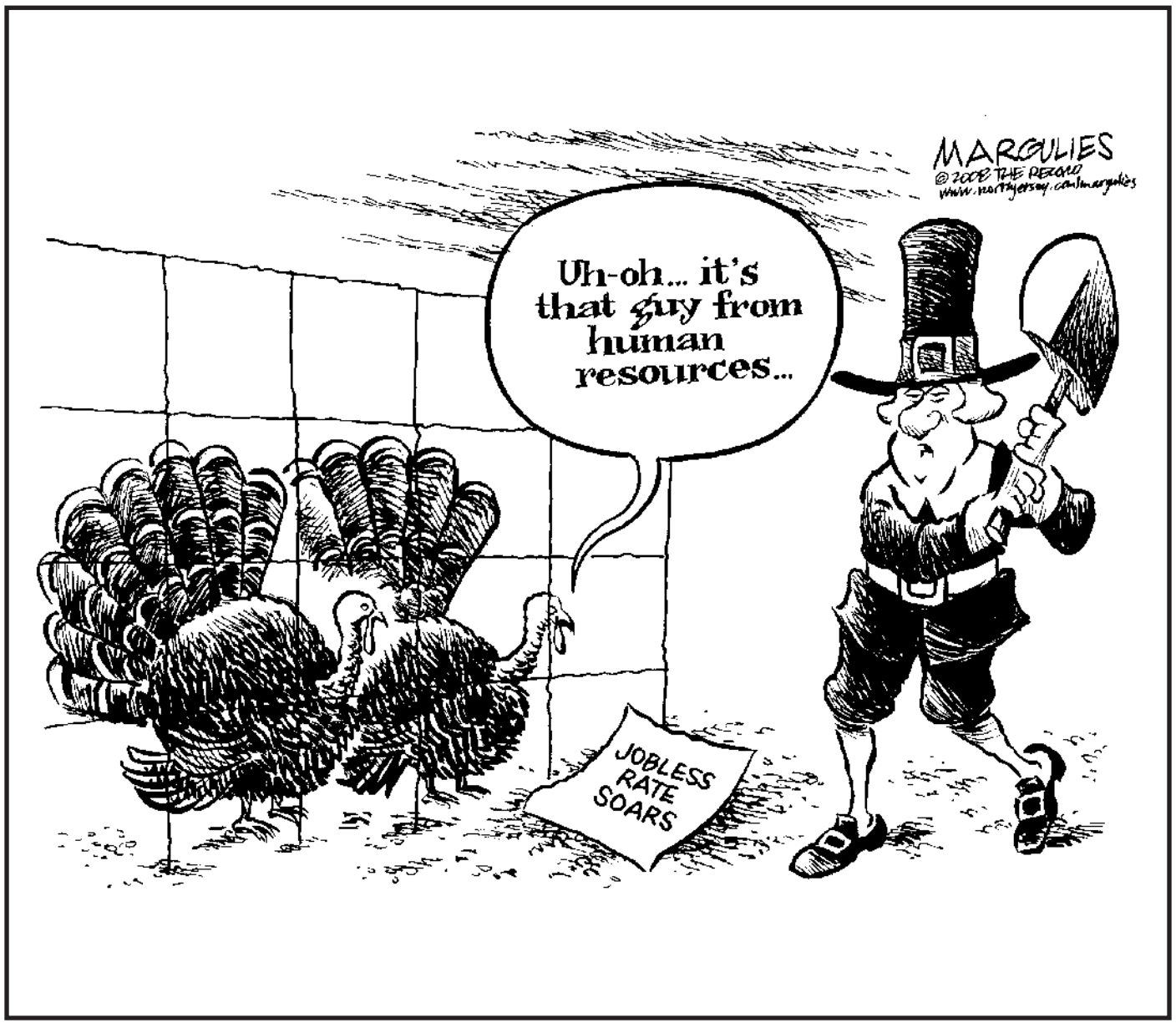


Paradise is for learners

By ED STEPHENS

Ed is a pilot, economist, and writer. He holds a degree in economics from UCLA and is a former U.S. naval officer. His column runs every Friday. Visit Ed at TropicalEd.com and SaipanBlog.com.

As the CNMI economy continues to transition to a totally government-based economy, anyone who wants to earn a living in the Commonwealth while remaining in the much-hated "private sector" has got a tough challenge.

But it's a doable challenge. And, as I never tire of pointing out, it's a challenge that technology is making a lot more manageable. Can you live in paradise and earn a living? Quite possibly, yes. So as you square your sites to cope with next year, here are some thoughts.

We'll set the stage with a happy tidbit from earlier this year, May 23, when I featured a very motivating book titled *The Long Tail* in this column (I'll put a link at SaipanBlog.com). The book is about the evolution and promise of Web-based commerce.

The book resonates with me. I was reading it in Taipei when I said, "Take this assignment and shove it" to my American paymaster in Taiwan. I was wondering what to do next, and *The Long Tail* inspired me to get cranking on a business idea that had been stewing in the back of my mind for a few years.

Fast forward to this week, when The Associated Press ran a story titled "Remote Wyoming towns home to broadband jobs." It highlights a very remote town indeed, Ten Sleep (Wyo.), with a population of 350. It's small but mighty: It's the seat of a company that pays its Wyoming-based teachers $15 an hour (starting wage) to conduct English tutoring sessions for Koreans via Skype (an Internet telephone service).

Now, I'm not suggesting that companies are going to race to Saipan to establish such businesses, because I doubt they will.

But what will fly is small, entrepreneurial efforts, un-tainted with the greasy clutches of our bumbling bureaucrats, that reach out to the world.

Here are some endeavors that I've seen first-hand. Any bright person in the Commonwealth who can read and who can learn can do this stuff.

1. Web-based web design services

Most Web designers I've met are self-taught. They get the program (e.g., Dreamweaver), read a book or two, learn their way around it, and, presto, they're charging anywhere up to $40 an hour for their services. One such guy I corresponded with moved from Europe to Bangkok, and he seems very happy indeed.

It doesn't take a school. Or a government program. Or a college degree. All it takes is a computer and effort. And a lot of coffee.

2. Web-based programming services

I know an aerospace engineer who burned out on the volatility of that industry, so she bought a book on C+ (a programming language) and one on SQL (I have no idea what that is) and she now programs full time, as a tele-commuter. She's very well paid, and sitting snug and comfortable working at home while everyone else is stuck in traffic or suffering through office politics.

Here we go again: It doesn't take a school. Or a government program. Or a college degree (though she has one). All it takes is a computer and effort. Period.

3. Web-based sales

I've known two people on Saipan who set up e-stores to sell stuff to the U.S. mainland. One such endeavor fizzled. But the other was alive and kicking the last time I checked, as the owner was making buying forays to the west Pacific and exporting his stuff (in entire container loads!) to the U.S. mainland.

And here we go yet again: It didn't a school. Or a government program. Or a grant from the Deputy Director of Baksheesh. All it took was a computer, lots of effort, and a few thousand bucks in capital.

The foregoing is merely three out of six niches on my list. And I'm not talking airy-fairy, pie-in-the-sky stuff here. I'll leave that to our Usual Suspects. What I'm talking about is what real people are doing in the real world. This isn't urban legend. It's reality.

Never mind the Commonwealth's pity party. Motivated people who are willing to put forth effort (instead of living off of other people's effort) and take some risks (instead of calling for "somebody else" to take the risks) have some interesting options. For such people, it's not a question of being able to earn a living on Saipan, but more a question of how other tropical venues, such as the Philippines or Thailand, compare to the CNMI in terms of lifestyle and living costs.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The Leaning Tower of Pisa provides a lesson for NMI retirees

By WILLIAM H. STEWART
Special to the Saipan Tribune

William H. Stewart is an economist, historian, and military cartographer.

I call it the "Leaning Tower of Pisa Syndrome" and relate it to the condition of the Retirement Fund as I perceive the present condition to be. Let me explain this profound epiphany and set the scene to make my point and afterward you see if you too have experienced something similar. I'll bet you have.

There's a sort of mental distraction related to being unaware or unappreciative of a particular situation of which the neglected realization can affect some people and distort their perspective.

In the NMI there are serious issues that should have long been of concern to all retirees but apparently for many people, they haven't been. I have in mind the dire situation of bankruptcy facing the Retirement Fund as result of the central government's intentional and inexcusable neglect of its contractual obligation toward paying its employer's contribution, now totaling many hundreds of millions of dollars. From as far back as 1997 and until 2002, the government only made partial, incomplete and inadequate payments to the Fund based on written agreements with the Fund and has even reneged on those agreements and hasn't made any payments for the past six years. Just imagine that!

As things now stand, the situation is analogous to that of the Titanic—steaming along until it met its disastrous end—slowly sinking for all to see. While the band played on!

I'll move away from the above subject for a bit, hopefully, to make a related point.

Once in Italy, I first noticed a strange human trait of an occasional lack of cognizance and perception, which reminded me of the retirement situation in the NMI. Basically, such a realization can concern any situation that might otherwise be considered obvious but upon closer examination is far from being so. The occurrence can often surface in which a person thinks they know something—anything—but in actuality do not really know it at all. It's self-deception in the extreme.

I call it the "Leaning Tower of Pisa Syndrome" and relate it to the condition of the Retirement Fund as I perceive the present condition to be. Let me explain this profound epiphany and set the scene to make my point and afterward you see if you too have experienced something similar. I'll bet you have.

In sharing my observation to provide an example, I would like to pose the question: "At what age did you first become aware that there was a Leaning Tower of Pisa ?" I would imagine that it was an early age, perhaps as a result of a photograph in a first grade primer.

I once lived in a suburb of Pisa, Italy and had many occasions to visit this wonderful structure completed in the 14th century. Like millions of others I had always known that it leaned precipitously. But one does not really appreciate the full impact of its height and awkward slant until it is actually witnessed in person. Approaching the piazza where it stands, the area is reached by walking down an avenue where, at street level, the imbalanced structure is shielded from view by three and four story buildings even though a municipal ordinance decrees that nothing may built higher than the tower. Turning the corner for an unencumbered, clear view, the magnificent ancient edifice of 58.4 meters (192 feet) comes into full and sudden view. Moving closer your instinct tells you not to stand beneath the side that first began to tilt during construction in the 12th century.

Positioned at the corner of the street at the point pedestrians turn at a right angle is a typical Italian outdoor cafe. Sitting there watching virtually every nationality in the world walk to the corner and turn where the tower looms into full view with an overpowering presence, every one of the visitors, speaking excitingly in their native language, invariably exclaims, "It really does lean."

Sitting there and hearing the same expression of astonishment over and over in a multitude of foreign languages among people who already knew the tower leaned by virtue of the reason for their visit and who—one would think—should be insulated from the sudden visual shock, prompted me to coin the phrase, "the Leaning Tower of Pisa syndrome." For me this example illustrates that we human beings can be aware of something—or some event—but, in reality, not fully know it. Those people knew the structure leaned—to see it was the reason for their visit—yet they all were astounded to see it and to have the image, which was so long in their mind, finally confirmed.

The same thing happens with a child when you tell it "fire burns." So often it has to be experienced to be believed. Think about that for a moment and apply the reasoning to the present condition of the Retirement Fund.

What does the above story have to do with the Commonwealth? It's all a matter of awareness. As an observer of the deteriorating condition of the Retirement Fund for many years, it has occurred to me that some lawmakers and others in the administration, past and present, either don't care or simply fail to comprehend the serious consequences certain to result from the continued neglect on the part of the central government. They have been clearly and repeatedly told by Fund officials that the base of the Commonwealth's "retirement tower" and that of the member's future financial security now leans toward imminent collapse as a result of the central government failure to meet its contractual obligation to pay the money it owes the members. Some seem to have a hard time realizing it and getting the message.

The point I wish to make is that you can know something—but really not know it in the fullest sense of comprehension. That's the way it is for many with respect to the sinking condition of the Retirement Fund. If you are a member, now is the time to insist the central government take action to pay what it owes.

If the central government's neglect in making its obligatory employer's contribution payments wasn't enough bad news for the future financial security of the members, those who have kept up with the Fund's losses in the stock market know that the time to follow the advice of Fund management is now. It's 5 minutes 'til midnight and possibly the last chance to mitigate some of the financial damage that has been sustained by the members from the unprecedented market decline. First, realize that it is not smart—and it is the worst possible time—to withdraw funds from a sinking market to meet pension payments. Currently the Fund is forced to do just that and to sell at the very worst time when the value of the member's investments are so low. Second, realize that somewhere at these low market levels will be the best time to buy. Just where and when that level arrives I don't know, but the Fund's money managers should be positioned to recognize the moment and seize the opportunity to invest at low bargain prices.

Of course, in order to do this the Fund needs the capital ready and available to invest and the only place to get it is from the central government in an amount sufficiently large enough to recover some of the losses previously experienced. I know Fund officials know this but I'm not certain if the central government does—or even cares. If something isn't done, and soon, the government's cancer of indifference and neglect will soon result in the death of the patient. Write that on the wall. If you are a member of the Fund, ask your government what it intends to do and demand an answer.

Letters to the Editor

Our Delegate to Washington

First, I want to congratulate our first Delegate to the U. S. Congress, Mr. Greg "Kilili" Sablan.

But the question of whether or not we, the CNMI as a people, will address the problem or the solution to our economic challenges is a question we need to answer quick, fast and in a hurry! We all know the problem is our failing economy in the face of federalization, which we also knew would make the challenges even greater and now it has been confirmed by a study conducted by an economic research service that our economy will suffer tremendously under federalization as it is presently proposed. The report went as far to say that our economy would be thrown back to the level it was in 1985, and in reality we haven't done anything to build the economy since the early '80s when the tourist industry took off. We are on a path that is taking us right back to where we started almost 30 years ago. We also know our present situation is a result of a short-sighted and irresponsible government that failed to make the decisions and take the necessary steps to meet the expectations of the indigenous people who wanted to achieve a higher quality of life equal to the mainland and the expectations of the federal government to meet all federal standards and expectations as part of the United States.

Our leaders have lost sight of the real problem and done everything but address the question that should have been answered when the Commonwealth was conceived, which is how to create a healthy and fully developed economy in the CNMI. Two industries *is not* a developed economy and we stopped trying to create a healthy, sustainable economic growth. I'm not surprised we will end up right back where we started. The smart governors on the mainland are lining up for President-elect Obama's economic stimulus but our focus is taking the feds to court. I'm sure people can see there is something wrong with that picture and they see the immediate problem our Delegate will face starting on his first day on the job.

So do we continue to this finger pointing and trying to say the feds are the problem or are we going to focus on finding some solutions to what I would like to call the "challenge" of growing our economy in the face of federalization? Some of our leaders have been our own worst enemy by fighting to avoid federal expectation to increase wages and improving immigration practices dating back over a decade. When will our leaders start looking for solutions to federalization, especially when the entire American economy is trying to reboot? The feds are already arresting our leaders and filing lawsuits to counter our fight. You don't have to be a political scientist to know we are going to lose.

The Obama administration has pledged to build our economy and we had better get on board and we can't do that by fighting the very Congress and President we need to help us. I am making this plea because the CNMI can't afford to send our new delegate to the U. S. Congress under the present conditions. Are we going to send him to Washington with fighting orders or compromising orders because he can't do both. Our delegate will surely be put on the spot in Washington to take a stance. He will need a unified position from the government and the people with the intent of finding a solution to federalization and not a fight. If our delegate goes to Washington fighting federalization, it will result in nothing tangible for the CNMI. He may even be shunned to a certain degree and he doesn't have a vote!

We must send our delegate to Congress with a united support base (government and citizens). We don't need the governor and people in the Legislature shouting at our U. S. Delegate in Washington, especially when he will have to deal with the hundreds of people in the U.S. Congress. We must be willing to compromise with the feds and our delegate must have the ability to compromise or we may never get any part of what we want from Congress. Compromise is one of the primary tools for getting things done in politics and in Washington and we must play the game by the feds' rules and not ours or we won't be playing at all.

The U.S. Constitution itself was ratified only because of some compromises, called the "Great Compromises." The CNMI delegates who drafted our Constitution had to reach a compromise or it might not have been a Commonwealth. The solution to federalization and growing our economy is finding the right mixture of components to meet the expectations of the feds and the CNMI in the form of compromises but no one is looking for the answers or solutions to offer the feds other than a straight out no which is what worries me.

The recent front-page story declaring the federalization task force is a waste of time. The task force is a collection of the same mentality that got us in the mess and we can't fix a problem with the same mentality that created the problem (Albert Einstein).

We have our first delegate headed to Congress and we had better send him with the right message or we are doomed when it comes to our relationship with the federal government. Asking him to introduce legislation against federalization will literally be political suicide for the CNMI. Our delegate will already be challenged and you only need to review the records of the delegates from the other territories and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to see the extraordinary odds of success he faces. Stubbornness and arrogance are not the answer nor will they fix our economy and our relationship with the feds. God speed Delegate Sablan and I pray your biggest challenge won't be from people in the CNMI.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°

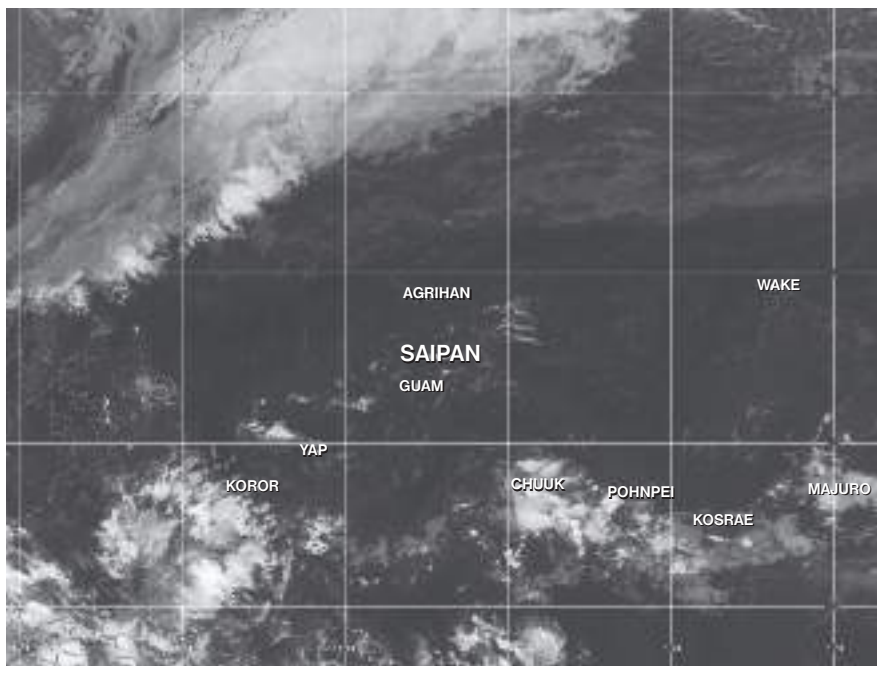
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84 ▼76
Palau	Showers	▲84 ▼77
Yap	Showers	▲87 ▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88 ▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85 ▼75
Kosrae	Showers	▲88 ▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲83 ▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲70 ▼59
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲48 ▼28
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲73 ▼59
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲80 ▼68
London	Rain	▲43 ▼40
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲70 ▼54
Manila	Showers	▲86 ▼75
Melbourne	Showers	▲66 ▼52
Miami	Sunny	▲78 ▼63
New York	Cloudy	▲50 ▼38
Osaka	Rain	▲58 ▼42
Paris	Cloudy	▲41 ▼34
Pusan	Showers	▲54 ▼36
Rome	Rain	▲61 ▼46
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲52 ▼37
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲62 ▼48
Seoul	Cloudy	▲46 ▼26
Tokyo	Rain	▲59 ▼45
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲52 ▼35

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 12:45PM, THURSDAY, NOV. 27, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A low pressure center is near 25N132E with extensive cloud cover along with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms up to 600 miles northwest of a line from 22N130E to 25N137E. A weak circulation near 3N133E is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms southwest of Palau or southwest of a line from 9N131E to 2N136E. Trade-wind convergence is causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms in two areas. One area is from across Chuuk to just south of Pohnpei and southwest of Kosrae or within 150 miles of a line from 8N150E to 3N163E. Another area across the Marshall Islands is from 7N168E to 12N175E to 12N180 to 6N180 back to 7N168E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:53AM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
9:06AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
2:22PM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
6:51PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:25AM	5:44 PM
Saturday	6:26AM	5:44 PM
Sunday	6:27AM	5:45 PM
Monday	6:27AM	5:45 PM
Tuesday	6:28AM	5:45 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:40AM	6:00 PM
Saturday	7:32AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	9:09AM	8:34 PM
Monday	9:09AM	8:34 PM
Tuesday	9:54AM	9:26 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 19, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:40am	Daily
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily

Saipan-Incheon

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7

Saipan-Shanghai

FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7

Guam-Manila

CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:25am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:15am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:25am+1	Daily

Incheon-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:40am+1	3,4,6,7

Shanghai-Saipan

FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6

Manila-Guam

CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

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- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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‘Public transportation would benefit man’amko’

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A public transportation system, preferably a bus, would be a big help to the CNMI’s senior citizens, according to director Howard Macaranas of the Office on Aging.

Macaranas brought up the idea as he was trying to figure out the challenges being faced by senior citizens “especially in this current economic crisis.”

“I’m not proposing but just letting the leadership realize the need for public transportation,” Macaranas said.

He said this would be beneficial to the elderly and will save a lot of money for the government.

“The aging population is increasing in numbers,” he said.

There are over 300 senior citizens in the CNMI who avail of the Office on Aging’s services.

Macaranas said the Legislature must start thinking about making public transport a reality on Saipan.

A mass transport, he said, will make life for many people on Saipan easier.

“Everybody can ride. The man’amko can go with the students. They will be much safer because bus stations will be put up,” he said.

He said this would also lessen cars on the road as well as save money for car owners because some of them would be availing of the rides instead of using their personal cars.

This would also seen to save spaces in parking lots.

“A taxi cannot carry everybody,” he said.

Macaranas stressed that whenever there is a gathering for the man’amko, government money is spent in transporting them.

At present, the Office on Aging owns nine vehicles: a bus, four vans and four smaller ones.

Meanwhile, another company, Wushin Corp., has been added to the list of Office on Aging donors, with a $1,000 gift in time for Thanksgiving.

Wushin director Sung Soo Lim and staff Josie Villanueva and Jun Patawaran turned over the check Wednesday to Man’amko Advisory Council president Frank Reyes and treasurer Ana Nakatsukasa in the presence of man’amko program coordinator Walter Manglona and Macaranas.

For the first time also, LaoLao Bay Golf Resort treated the man’amko to a dinner party on Tuesday.

Rotary Club also hosted them to a luncheon and gift giving party on Tuesday, an event the Rotarians have been doing every year in the spirit of Thanksgiving.

Fiesta Resort and Spa also treated them to a luncheon on Nov. 18.

The CNMI’s senior citizens receive a $1,000 donation from Wushin Corp. Wednesday. From left are *Man’amko* Advisory Council chair Frank Reyes and treasurer Ana Nakatsukasa (showing off the check), Wushin Corp. Josie Villanueva and Jun Patawaran (holding a plaque of appreciation). Also present during the turnover were *man’amko* program coordinator Walter Manglona, Office on Aging director Howard Macaranas, Wushin Corp. director Sung Soo Lim.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Symposium highlights life in pre-war NMI, Palau

CNMI historian Don Farrell presents a copy of the book NMI History to Dr. Daniel Long, Professor of Linguistics at Tokyo Metropolitan University. The book was a gift from Dr. Rita Inos, Commissioner of Education.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pre-World War II life in the Northern Marianas and Palau were the highlights of a recent symposium held in Okinawa, featuring some of the former residents of these Pacific jurisdictions.

Dr. Daniel Long, Professor of Linguistics at Tokyo Metropolitan University, spearheaded the symposium titled "Considering Nan'yo from the Standpoint of Prewar Life on Saipan, Tinian, Rota and Palau."

The conference, held on Nov. 22 and 23, was conducted at the new Okinawa Prefectural Museum.

The first day of the conference consisted of a panel discussion by three former residents of the islands: Mr. Sakihama, a former resident of Saipan; Hiromoto Kikuchi, a former resident of Tinian; and Humiko Kingzio, current resident of Palau. All spoke on their experiences during the period of the prewar Nan'yo-cho administration of Micronesia.

Following the presentations, the panelists answered questions from an audience of 100 people, which included both researchers and other former residents of Micronesia

On the second day of the conference Dr. Long presented his paper titled "Language Contact between Chamorros, Carolinians, and Japanese on Saipan and Tinian in the Prewar Period".

Also speaking were:

■ Keiko Ono (Okinawa University) "Taiwan and Nan'yo Sugar Plantation Towns: Takao, Chalan Kanoa and Tinian";

■ Junko Konishi (Shizuoka University) "How March (Maas) Dances and Songs Went from Saipan to Ogasawara and Okinawa";

■ Masato Arai (Tokyo Metropolitan University) "The Japanese Language Retained by Man'amko (elderly) Speakers in the Mariana Islands";

■ Koju Chiwaki (Tokyo Metropolitan University) "Language Policy of Nan'yo as seen through the Language Life of Island Residents";

■ Hideko Tsushima (Juntendo University) "Why did Hachijo Islanders Go to Nan'yo?";

■ Toyomi Asano (Chukyo University) "The Repatriation from the Nan'yo Islands and the Postwar Re-emigration movement in Okinawa"; and

■ Don Farrell: "Life in Camp Chulu (Tinian) during World War II".

Abstracts will be available online at the Tokyo Metropolitan University Department of Japanese Linguistics Nan'yo Oral History Website from Jan. 15.

Funding for the conference was provided by a grant from the Heiwa-Nakajima Foundation.

Farrell said that it was Dr. Long who invited him to speak at the symposium.

"He was kind enough to invite me to the conference. My presentation was the last PowerPoint of the conference. There were several elderly men in the audience who vividly remembered being in the stockade. Thanks to Dr. Long, I had a translator with me, both during the conference and the dinners. Listening to their stories of life on the islands as teenagers before and during the war clarified so many points of history that are not adequately expressed the available published English language descriptions of the era," said Farrell.

Dr. Long had also invited Tun Juan Blanco of Saipan who had reluctantly declined due to health reasons. Conference participants were all looking forward to the participation of Tun Juan Borja King of Tinian, who had graciously accepted the invitation to participate before his untimely passing shortly before the conference. The participants expressed their sorrow at the passing of Mr. King. His fluency in Japanese and understanding of life in the prewar Marianas would have contributed greatly to the conference.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Daniel Long, Professor of Linguistics at Tokyo Metropolitan University, announces the passing of Tun Juan Borja King of Tinian, who had accepted the invitation to participate before his untimely passing shortly before the conference. Juan King's memorial announcement is shown on the screen. The other three persons in the picture are former residents of the islands: Mr. Sakihama, a former resident of Saipan; Hiromoto Kikuchi, a former resident of Tinian; and Humiko Kingzio, current resident of Palau.

Participants pointed out the necessity for a similar conference in a venue where more Marianas *man'amko* could participate.

"Dr. Long spoke at length about his dialogue with Tun Juan earlier this year, which led to the discussion of having a similar conference on Saipan next year," Farrell said. "All the participants expressed their interest and several of the presenters offered to present papers, if it happened." ***(PR)***

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CNMI WIC moves to new location

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program under the CNMI Department of Public Health would like to inform the public and WIC participants that the program has relocated its clinic to Building N-13, Upper Navy Hill (behind Brilliant Star School; follow the blue WIC signs). For any questions, call 664-4067. ***(PR)***

New office hours for child care office

Beginning Dec. 1, 2008, the Child Care Program Office will be closed for business every Friday, from 1pm to 4:30pm. This time will be used for administrative purposes, such as processing of clients' applications, re-eligibility, monitoring and other activities essential to the smooth operation of the program.

The new business hours will be:

- Monday to Thursday 7:30am to 4:30pm
- Friday 7:30am to 1pm

Hafa Day Events today

The public is being invited to join the Commonwealth Diabetes Coalition today, Nov. 28, from 8:30am to 12pm at Garapan Central Park for the Hafa Day Events (Health Awareness & Fitness Activities). This is an opportunity for parents, teachers, the community, and most especially kids ages 7 to 15 years old to learn fun ways to stay active throughout the holidays. Go to www.marianashealth.com to register online for the Hafa Day event. There will be a lot of giveaways, and even more memories and laughter.

Family Hope Center relocates

Effective Dec. 1, 2008, the Family Hope Center will relocate the Center to the office of the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc., located on Middle Road, approximately 100 yards north of the Gualo Rai traffic light intersection.

For more information, contact the center at 664-7041 & 7044 or CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities at 664-7000/3/5/42. ***(PR)***

Vendors sought for Puengin Inetnon

The Kagman Komunidat Association is looking for interested vendors to sell food, clothing, games, and other types of family oriented entertainment for "Puengin Inetnon."

"Puengin Inetnon" is Chamorro for "a night of gathering."

It will be similar to the Thursday Night Street Market in Garapan except that it will be held every government payday Friday at the Kagman Community Center. Interested vendors, volunteers, and performers may call the Kagman Post Office at 256-POST for more info. ***(PR)***

Red Cross Health & Safety Trainings

The American Red Cross announces the following health and safety training for the month December 2008:

- Adult CPR: Dec. 2, Tuesday, 6pm -10pm
- First Aid: Dec. 16, Tuesday, 6pm – 10pm
- Infant & Child CPR: Dec. 20, Saturday, 8am – 1pm.

The training fee for Adult CPR and First Aid is $30 per person/per course and the training fee for the Infant & Child CPR is $35 per person. A participant's booklet is required. Participant's booklet is $5 each and is good for all three courses.

For more information, call the NMI Chapter Office at 234-3459. ***(ARC)***

Math placement test set

The Northern Marianas College will be conducting the Math Placement Tests on the following dates:

Jan. 6	10am - 12pm	Room: D-1
	5pm - 7pm	Room: D-1
Jan. 8	10am - 12pm	Room: D-1
	5pm - 7pm	Room: A-9
Jan. 13	10am - 12pm	Room: A-9
Jan. 15	5pm - 7pm	Room: A-9

No reservations needed—first come first served. No admittance to the testing room will be allowed after the starting times listed above.

Those who wish to take the test must bring a valid ID (Drivers License, passport or School ID), pens or pencils and a calculator (optional). There is a $25 fee for the Math Placement Test that must be paid in advance at the NMC Cashier Window at the Finance Office, located in Building N. Applicants will not be admitted to the testing room without proof of payment (a receipt for the placement test fee). NMC students are not allowed to take the placement test more than once. The only exception to this condition is for NMC students who have *not* taken a math class within one year of taking the math placement test.

Call the Sciences, Mathematics, Health & Athletics Department at (670) 234-5498 Ext. 1200 or 1212 for more information. ***(NMC)***

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2X4X18 - $6.70	2X4X18 - $9.70
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U08-043P	2000	CELICA 2DR	MANUAL	72097	BLUE	ABZ-838	7,999	
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Pacific

A. Samoa congressman blasts layoffs at cannery

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (Samoa News/PIR)—American Samoa Delegate Faleomavaega Eni yesterday wrote the StarKist Company to complain about their recent announcement to eliminate 20 full time positions as well as certain benefits for hourly workers at StarKist Samoa.

Most of the cost-saving measures go into effect on Jan. 1, 2009.

In his Nov. 25 letter to StarKist Company president and CEO Don Binotto, the congressman said he has already requested a meeting with Dongwon chair and CEO Kim Jae-Chul, who he had the opportunity to meet in South Korea recently.

The congressman's letter was an angry denouncement of both canneries, saying they are first in line for handouts and last in line to do right by their workers.

Faleomavaega said he does not blame Dongwon for the recent cost-cutting measures, but instead points his finger directly at the Del Monte/StarKist management team.

He said it's his understanding that as part of Dongwon's purchase of StarKist, Kim had to retain a Del Monte/StarKist management team for a two-year period, and questions why this is the case.

"After all, Dongwon paid $363 million to buy StarKist and there should be no further reason for Dongwon to pay out additional money to a Del Monte/StarKist management team that now publicly admits that it must introduce cost-saving measures to keep StarKist Samoa afloat," Faleomavaega wrote.

"If StarKist really must introduce cost-saving measures in American Samoa after having received $363 million from Dongwon, then either Del Monte misled Dongwon about StarKist's worth, or StarKist is trying to take advantage of Chairman Kim and our Samoan workers by squeezing every last nickel out of us," he said.

Gov. Togiola Tulafono announced on his radio program last weekend he is calling for a meeting with StarKist owner, the South Korea-based Dongwon Industries. Togiola said if such a meeting did occur, he planned to invite local leaders as well as Faleomavaega to attend so everyone would be fully aware of where StarKist stands at this point.

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RESCUE AT SEA
In this photo released by the Pacific Sun cruise ship via NZPA, rescued yacht crew, from left, French citizens Paul Migno, Maud Moussette, Mark Iaconetti of the U.S. and New Zealand's Robert Cole, pose aboard the P&O cruise ship after their rescue near Noumea, New Caledonia, Saturday, Nov. 22, 2008. Their 14-meter cutter-rigged sloop Sambaluka, struck a unchartered reef Thursday morning, when their emergency signal then alerted a French military aircraft which dropped a 15-man liferaft and the P&O ship which diverted from its course to Brisbane to rescue them.

AP

Group lost at sea for a month

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (PNG Post-Courier/PIR)—Four men from Kiribati who drifted ashore in New Ireland Province after spending 32 days at sea will be going home on Thursday.

Tiubeta Been Rimon, a 35-year-old airport manager, 60-year-old Ritiata Tebiri, a retired sailor, 49-year-old Abota Roma Taribo, a retired lecturer and former principal of the Kiribati Teachers College and 32-year-old Tiaki Reke Tirikai, a primary school teacher, will finally see their families and loved ones after spending a month at the sea.

The New Ireland Provincial Disaster office together with the National Disaster Centre have organized for the four men to return home.

The New Ireland Provincial Government has also provided them with allowances to buy, especially, clothes for the trip back to Kiribati.

Provincial Disaster coordinator Elsie Wamburi said the four men had gone out on a fishing trip in a 20-foot banana boat on Oct. 20, ran out of fuel and were swept away by strong winds.

The skipper of the boat, Tebiri, who is a retired sailor, managed to hold the group together by using his survival techniques.

The men survived on raw fish and rain water for the period of 32 days on the sea.

A fishing boat spotted them a month later and gave them fuel to reach Mussau Island in New Ireland Province.

However, their fuel ran out some 100 meters from dry land. Fortunately, a local fisherman who saw them was able to assist them to dry land.

Wambun said the men were dehydrated and could not talk so they were treated by health extension officers in the area.

She said after being brought to Kavieng town, the men were able to contact their families at Kiribati.

They will be returning to their home country.

PACIFIC BRIEFS

A. Samoa agency to take over fuel supply

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—As of the start of next month, the American Samoa Power Authority, (ASPA) will import its own fuel and be a supplier for customers now serviced by Mobil Oil. Mobil is terminating its local operations November 30. At present ASPA buys its fuel from Mobil. ASPA and Mobil have been negotiating since May of this year for ASPA to source its own fuel needs and supply existing Mobil customers when the oil company withdraws. ASPA CEO Micahel Keyser stated this is the most significant opportunity to drive down electric costs in many years. He said the revenue from this additional volume can be used to develop renewable energies.

Help on the way for tsunami victims in Solomons

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Star/PIR)—North West Choiseul Member of Parliament Clement Kengava has begun tsunami rehabilitation work in his constituency. Kengava paid 2375 roofing irons and 395 ridge caps from the Solomon Sheet Steels for houses damaged during the tsunami April last year. These materials cost SB$741,312 [US$106,378] and they were paid from funds the Government provided to the constituency. Kengava said the rehabilitation fund will be disposed to people in his area in three groups. First group are those whose houses were totally destroyed by the tsunami, second are those whose houses were damaged, and the third group those whose houses have collapsed.

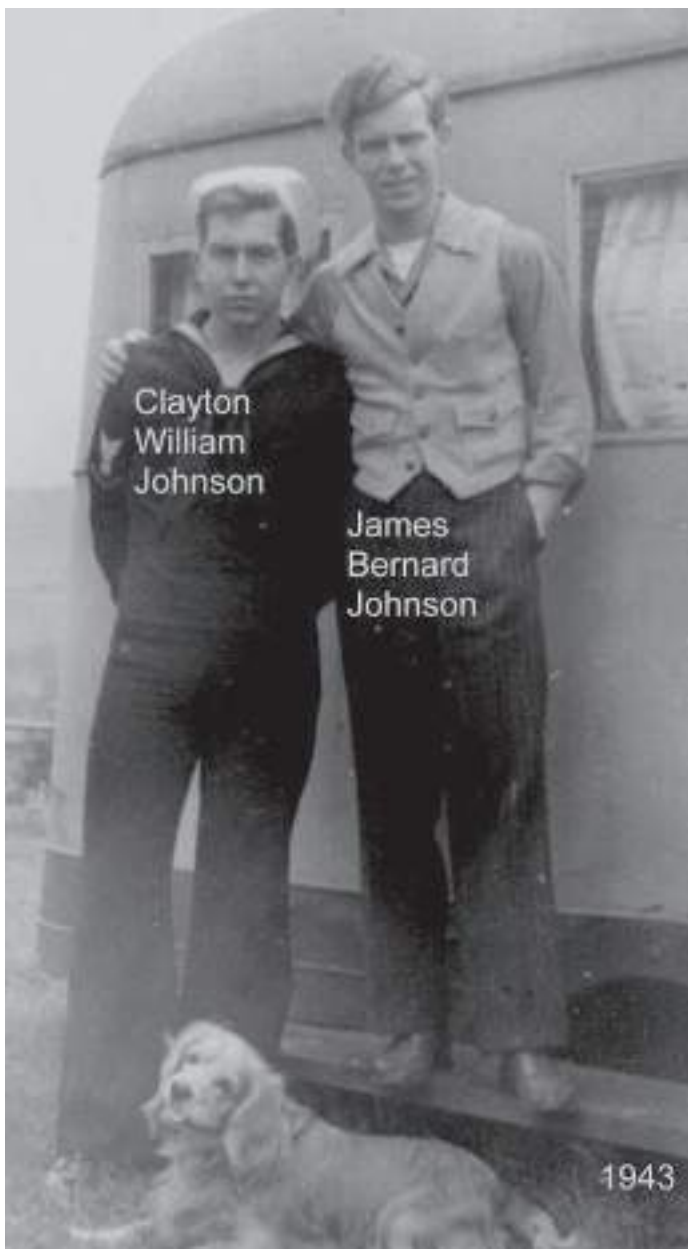
Australian experts study malaria in Solomons

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Star/PIR)—A team of local and Australian malaria experts returned from Temotu Province yesterday after conducting a malaria survey and study there. This is a joint project between Solomon Islands and Australia and is funded through AusAid. University of Queensland school of Population Health, Queensland institution of Medical Research, Australian Army Malaria Institute in conjunction, and Solomon Islands Ministry of Health were involved. The team toured Santa Cruz, Vanikoro, and Utupua. Scientific officer for Australian Army Malaria Institution, Ivor Harris said they got 10,000 blood samples and out of that 400 people were positive with malaria.

France to give Tahiti military base to government

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—The French defenSe minister, Herve Morin, says the French military base in Tahiti will be sold to French Polynesia for one euro. Morin made the announcement after talks with the French Polynesian president, Gaston Tong Sang, and Philip Schyle, who is the mayor of Arue where the base is located. Morin says the 27 hectare site is to be converted to what he calls a breeding ground for businesses. He says the base won't be closed until a plan for its future use has been drawn up, which he says should happen within a couple of years.

'139 WWII Marines entombed on Tarawa atoll'



AP

In this undated image released by Jim Johnson, his father Clayton William Johnson, left, is seen next to his uncle James Bernard Johnson.

By MELISSA NELSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP)—A Florida man's quest to find hundreds of U.S. Marines buried anonymously after one of World War II's bloodiest battles could lead to the largest identification of American war dead in history.

Researchers used ground-penetrating radar, tediously reviewed thousands of military documents and interviewed hundreds of others to find 139 graves. There, they say, lie the remains of men who died 65 years ago out in the Pacific Ocean on Tarawa Atoll.

Mark Noah of Marathon, Fla., raised money for the expedition through his nonprofit, History Flight, by selling vintage military aircraft rides at air shows. He hopes the government will investigate further after research is given to the U.S. Defense Department in January—and he hopes the remains are identified and eventually returned to the men's families.

"There will have to be convincing evidence before we mount an excavation of any spot that could yield remains," said Larry Greer, spokesman for the Pentagon's Prisoner of War and Missing in Action Office.

U.S. government archaeologists would likely excavate a small test site first, he said.

James Clayton Johnson never met his uncle, James Bernard Johnson, who died on Tarawa at age 17. But Johnson, who was named for his father's brother, never forgot that young Marine.

Now 60 and living near Noah in the Florida Keys, Johnson learned of the effort to identify the burial sites of his uncle and 541 other missing U.S. Marines on Tarawa while researching his uncle's military records online.

More than 990 U.S. marines and 680 sailors died and almost 2,300 were wounded in the three-day battle, one of the first major amphibious assaults in the Pacific.

Johnson, himself a veteran who led troops into Cambodia as a 21-year-old Army platoon leader during the Vietnam War, isn't sure having his uncle's body returned to the U.S. would provide any sort of closure.

"There aren't any open wounds for me that need fixing," the former special forces soldier said.

But Johnson wants the world to know about the volunteers committed to preserving the names and stories of thousands of American soldiers.

"My problem is that people don't care," he said. "I get pumped up, and I want people to think and look at things like this."

Noah, a 43-year-old commercial pilot and longtime World War II history buff, raised the $90,000 for the Tarawa work by selling rides at air shows and partnering with The American Legion, VFW and other groups.

Noah and Massachusetts historian Ted Darcy of WFI Research Group reviewed eight burial sites they believe contain U.S. remains. They say the claim is backed by burial rosters, casualty cards and combat reports; interviews with construction contractors who found human remains at the sites and locals who have found American artifacts; and other information.

But they'll leave the digging to the U.S. government, so the archaeological integrity of the sites isn't spoiled.

The names of many fallen soldiers were lost as U.S. Navy crews rushed to build desperately needed landing strips on the tiny atoll after the Nov. 20, 1943, invasion. Many of the graves were relocated.

The military didn't focus on identifying the soldiers who died at Tarawa until 1945, when an Army officer was tasked with unraveling the hasty reburials.

"You could sense his frustrations in his reports," said Noah, who reviewed all the burial records.

The brief telegram James Hildebrand's grandmother received on Dec. 26, 1943, said her 20-year-old son died on Tarawa Atoll and included this line: "On account of existing conditions the body if recovered cannot be returned at present. If further details are received you will be informed."

James Hildebrand, now 65 and living in Gilroy, Calif., said his grandmother wrote letters to the Navy for years trying to recover his uncle's body.

He'd like to know whether the remains could be buried in a mass grave in a military cemetery in Hawaii with a group of unidentified U.S. soldiers taken from Tarawa many years ago. And he hopes the Defense Department will try to find his uncle's body on Tarawa.

"If he's still on the island ... there's space in our family plot in Tucson where he could be buried. It would mean a lot to our family," he said.

For 10 years, Merill Redman of Illinois has ultimately been encouraged by reports of efforts to find his brother's body on Tarawa. He's been disappointed each time.

Redman, now 79, was 14 when his older brother joined the Marine Corps and left their small town of Watseka. He's even traveled to Tarawa himself, trying to find his brother and bring him home.

"Each little thread," he said, "it drives me on in this project."

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Island Snapshots

HOLIDAY BAZAAR
Brilliant Star students present a Hawaiian musical number together with parent Larry Lee playing the ukulele during the Brilliant Star Holiday Bazaar 2008 held last Saturday, Nov. 22, at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

MARCONI CALINDAS

Keynotes Music Center student sing *We're All in this Together* during the morning program in Saturday's Holiday Bazaar at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

MARCONI CALINDAS

The colors of Christmas are seen in one of the booths during the Brilliant Star Holiday Bazaar.

MARCONI CALINDAS

A teacher from Brilliant Star School performs a traditional Chinese dance during last Saturday's Brilliant Star Holiday Bazaar 2008 at the Multi-Purpose Center.

MARCONI CALINDAS

Leya's Crafts artist and owner Tokie Mojica prepares her booth before the opening of the Brilliant Star Holiday Bazaar 2008 held last Saturday at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

MARCONI CALINDAS

Teachers from Brilliant Star School perform a traditional Chinese dance during the Holiday Bazaar.

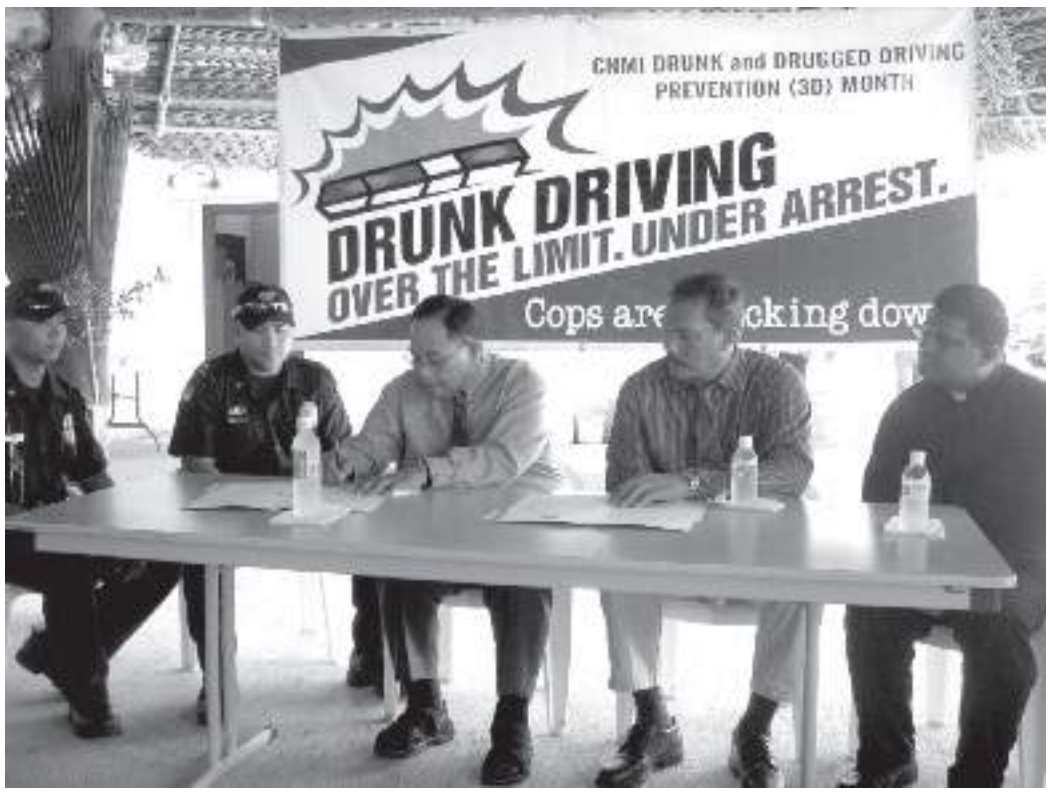
MARCONI CALINDAS

NEW OFFICES
Department of Public Safety's Criminal Investigation Division acting commander Sgt. Sylvan Rangamar, left, poses with a staff and traffic officer after Wednesday's blessing of the new offices for CID and Traffic Section at the former Minimum Security facility in Susupe.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The new offices for CID and Traffic Section at the former Minimum Security facility in Susupe.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE



3D CAMPAIGN
Gov. Benigno Fitial signs a proclamation declaring December as CNMI Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month yesterday at the Department of Public Safety. With the governor, from left, are 3Ds Committee vice-chair Police Officer 1 Jason Rekemesik, Police Officer 2 Eric David, DPS Commissioner Santiago Tudela, and Fr. Jessie Reyes.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

PTI SUPPORTS PSS EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR
PTI donates appreciation gifts to all the recipients of this year's CNMI Public School System Teachers, Teacher Aides and Support Staff of the Year. From left, Liberty Rabauliman, PSS Certification Specialist; Ed Manglona, PTI Marketing Coordinator; Lori Grizzard, PSS Acting Director of Finance; Coreen C. Palacios, PSS Professional Development Specialist; and Alice Duenas, PSS Personnel Specialist I.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business

Obama reassures nervous nation on ailing economy

CHICAGO (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama sought to reassure the nation and nervous holiday shoppers about the ailing economy Wednesday as beleaguered stores braced for their most important month of the year.

"Help is on the way," he proclaimed at his third news briefing on the economy this week. Fifty-five days away from taking office, he declared he would have an economic plan ready for action "starting day one."

Investors' improved spirits kept pace. The Dow Jones industrials climbed 247 points, marking the first time since last spring that the average had risen for four straight sessions.

To help with ideas from outside the White House, Obama announced he was forming a new team of advisers with former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker as the head.

"There is no doubt that during tough economic times family budgets are going to be pinched," Obama said. "I think it is important for the American people, though, to have confidence that we've gone through recessions before, we've gone through difficult times before, that my administration intends to get this economy back on track."

Obama

The crucial holiday shopping season gets under way in earnest on Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, with deep discounts already in place as stores try to lure buyers who are worried about their jobs and homes.

Volcker, 81, will head the President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board. The board's top staff official will be Austan Goolsbee, a University of Chicago economist, Obama said.

Volcker is no stranger to economic crises, having led the Fed under two presidents from 1979 to 1987. Volcker is a legendary central banker who raised interest rates and restricted the money supply to tame raging inflation in the 1980s. It was a painful prescription that helped send the economy into one of the nation's worst recessions.

However, he is largely credited with ushering in nearly three decades of relatively low inflation—an unthinkable feat in the 1970s, when the country was grappling with high unemployment, high interest rates and ever-rising prices.

"He pulls no punches," Obama said of Volcker. "He seems to be fairly opinionated."

Obama spoke as businesses were preparing for what many fear could be a disastrous month. And there was more bad news on the economy's current state.

The government reported Wednesday that jobless claims had remained at recessionary levels, consumers had cut back on their spending by the largest amount since the 2001 terrorist attacks, orders to U.S. factories had plunged anew and home sales had fallen to the lowest level in nearly 18 years.

Still, investors produced the Dow's fourth straight day of gains.

Dow, S&P 500 clinch 4th straight winning session

NEW YORK (AP)—A stock market gaining confidence in the nation's financial system bolted higher Wednesday, propelling the Dow Jones industrials and Standard & Poor's 500 index to their first four-day advance since last spring.

The market reversed losses from earlier in the session after President-elect Barack Obama pledged he would have a plan to deal with the nation's economic crisis on his first day in office. After filling more spots to his economic team, Obama stated that "help is on the way."

The major indexes built on their gains through the afternoon, but analysts warned that this latest advance came on light pre-holiday volume. The Dow is up 1,174 points, or 15.5 percent, during the past four days, and the S&P 500 is up 135, or 18 percent—giving both indicators their biggest four-day rise since the Great Depression. The rally marks a string of gains that seemed impossible to achieve in the depths of selling that began in mid-September after the collapse of Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc.

Analysts saw encouraging signs in the rally, but they were still cautious given months of extreme market volatility.

"Sentiment has turned slightly more positive over the past few days with some of the government packages in the U.S. and the stimulus programs that have been announced," said Michael Sheldon, chief market strategist at RDM Financial Group. "That might help turn the tide."

The government's latest steps aimed at restoring the nation's financial system to health came Tuesday, when the Bush administration and the Federal Reserve pledged $800 billion to boost lending on credit cards, auto loans, mortgages and other borrowing.

For stores, holiday season is practically over already

NEW YORK (AP)—The holiday shopping season begins Friday with a blitz of early morning specials. For some merchants, though, it's practically over already.

Piles of jewelry, clothing and electric drills are bypassing store shelves and heading straight to liquidators by the caseload as stores try to save as much cash as they can.

Major department stores and mall-based chains have cut prices up to 70 percent to move out mounds of excess inventory stuck in the pipeline since the financial crisis hit in September and people snapped their wallets shut.

Big moves of merchandise happen every year—but usually after Christmas. This year stores are desperate to shed inventory even before Thanksgiving.

"The holiday season is over. The reason? It just never got started," said Marshal Cohen, chief industry analyst at NPD Group, a market research firm. "How cheap things are doesn't bode well for holiday success."

The deep price cuts even on luxury brands—think 40 percent off on $5,000 Chanel suits and 70 percent off on designer shoes at Saks Fifth Avenue and 40 percent off $695 Ralph Lauren leopard-printed pumps at Bloomingdale's—are only good news for the dwindling pool of consumers who are comfortable enough financially to take advantage of the deals.

Experts say discounts are only going to get even better as stores resort to more extreme measures to clear out unsold items. The value of coats and sweaters drops dramatically as the winter months wear on.

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Nation

Economy keeps more Americans home for Thanksgiving

CHICAGO (AP)—Scott Fuchs will spend Thanksgiving with his family in Florida like he's done for 20 years or so. But like thousands of other Americans, his brother is staying home—travel isn't possible after he was laid off from his job in Maryland.

"Lack of funds," said Fuchs, a 49-year-old computer programmer from Plano, Texas.

A troubled economy is casting a shadow over the country on this Thanksgiving weekend, and thousands are opting to stay home instead of embark on costly voyages to see loved ones. Airport terminals were eerily empty Wednesday, devoid of the typical chaos on the day before a holiday. It was the same on the roads, where traffic breezed along even though plummeting gas prices made it much cheaper to drive.

Nationally, the Automobile Association of America says 41 million Americans were expected to travel more than 50 miles for the holiday, down about 1.5 percent or 600,000 people from last Thanksgiving. Of those, about 4.5 million are expected to fly, down about 7 percent from last year, while around 33.2 million will drive, a decrease of about 1 percent.

It is the first decrease in holiday travel nationally since 2002, and the largest since the Thanksgiving that followed the terror attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

AP

Monique White prepares one of many pumpkin pies at her Littleton, Colo., home Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2008. Monique placed an ad on Craig's List inviting anyone who wanted to come and have Thanksgiving dinner at her home.

"This is a reflection of the economy, and while gas prices have come down so significantly, people are paying more for everything else," said Beth Mosher, spokeswoman for AAA Chicago.

While most trips were going smoothly, security was a concern in New York City after federal authorities warned law enforcement of a possible terror plot by al-Qaida against the city's subway and train systems during the holiday season, according to an internal memo obtained by The Associated Press. However, no changes were made to the nation's threat level.

There were no substantial delays at airports, and travelers were surprised to find themselves moving more quickly than on a typical weekend. "It's so quiet," Jen Lawless said in a hushed voice as she arrived at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport with her husband for a trip to North Carolina.

Some share the bounty this bleak Thanksgiving

A Thanksgiving ago, many of us were fretting over delays at the airport, our holiday season shopping lists, even things like whether to get another Botox injection or a new set of wheels.

Now we worry about keeping gas in the car. Or just keeping the car.

This Thanksgiving, a slumping economy is making many Americans more fearful than thankful.

And yet, as grim as these days are, millions of Americans are still preparing to turn a meal into a celebration—to find joy in the midst of growing hardship.

You could see glimmers of it everywhere—from the suburbs north of Los Angeles, where families who once lived in new homes lined up for free food, to Denver, where dozens down on their luck answered an Internet ad for Thanksgiving dinner, to a church on Wall Street, where a clergyman repeatedly struggled to answer the question of the moment: Will the hard times ever end?

NY subway terror threat emerges on busy travel day

NEW YORK (AP)—Police bolstered security in subways and trains Wednesday after the government warned that al-Qaida suicide bombers were contemplating an attack on New York's mass-transit systems during the holiday season. An internal memo obtained by The Associated Press says the FBI has received a "plausible but unsubstantiated" report that al-Qaida terrorists in late September may have discussed attacking the subway system.

The internal bulletin says al-Qaida terrorists "in late September may have discussed targeting transit systems in and around New York City. These discussions reportedly involved the use of suicide bombers or explosives placed on subway/passenger rail systems," according to the document.

"We have no specific details to confirm that this plot has developed beyond aspirational planning, but we are issuing this warning out of concern that such an attack could possibly be conducted during the forthcoming holiday season," according to the warning dated Tuesday.

A person briefed on the matter, speaking to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the intelligence-gathering work, said the threat may also be directed at the passenger rail lines running through New York, such as Amtrak and the Long Island Rail Road, which are particularly busy with Thanksgiving holiday travelers.

A federal law enforcement official said there's no indication that anyone involved in the planning is in the United States. That official also spoke on condition of anonymity because it involved intelligence-gathering.

While law enforcement stepped up patrols around subways and trains, many commuters around the city were unfazed by the news and had not even heard of the threat.

"If you get scared that means they win," commuter Omid Sima said on the platform of the subway below Rockefeller Center. "There's always been terror warnings. I can't change my life because of that."

The Big Apple's tightly packed passenger trains and subway cars have long been a source of concern for police officers—and a tempting target for would-be terrorists—but there is often disagreement as to how seriously authorities should take specific intelligence reports.

The city has more than 450 subway stations that handle millions of commuters every day.

Calls for national infant formula recall spread

Disclosure that laboratory tests have detected traces of contamination in several major brands of infant formula generated concern and confusion Wednesday, with a national consumer's group and the Illinois attorney general demanding a Food and Drug Administration recall and the federal agency saying it had released inaccurate information on what chemicals were found in which top selling products.

As worried parents called manufacturers looking for guidance about the presence of melamine and a key byproduct in U.S.-made formula, the FDA reiterated its position that the baby food is safe and parents should continue feeding it to their babies, contending the extremely low levels of contamination do not present a health danger.

Also, a spokesman for one major manufacturer criticized the FDA for its release of the inaccurate information.

"We're getting inundated by calls from moms confused about the situation," said Pete Paradossi, a spokesman for Mead Johnson, one of the three major manufacturers of U.S.-made formula involved in the problem detections.

Melamine is the industrial chemical found in Chinese infant formula—in far larger concentrations—that has been blamed for killing at least three babies and making at least 50,000 others ill.

The FDA and other experts said the melamine contamination in U.S.-made formula had occurred during the manufacturing process, rather than intentionally as was done in Chinese production. The manufacturers insist their products are safe.

AP

Chemist Michael Filigenzi demonstrates how vials of liquefied pet food are placed in trays for testing for the industrial chemical melamine at the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory, at the University of California, Davis, campus in Davis, Calif., Monday, Nov. 18, 2008.

Obama says daughters will do chores in White House

CHICAGO (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, said their young daughters will still have to do chores in the White House and won't get out of doing homework just because they're the president's children. In an interview with Barbara Walters, the Obamas said Sasha, 7, and Malia, 10, will have lives as normal as possible. That means helping out around the house.

"That was the first thing I said to some of the staff when I did my visit," Michelle Obama said. "I said, 'You know, we're going to have to set up some boundaries,' because they're going to need to be able to make their beds, and clean up."

The girls, who will be attending the prestigious Sidwell Friends School, also will be expected to do their homework as usual. Although, the president-elect said, Malia has her eye on a special spot to write important papers.

When she came back from her White House visit recently, she told her dad that she plans to work at the desk in the Lincoln bedroom.

Obama, who is known to be an avid reader of Lincoln history, said his daughter told him "I'm going to sit at that desk, because I'm thinking that will inspire big thoughts."

During the interview, Obama described the desk as being the spot where Lincoln signed the Gettysburg Address. While there is a copy of the address on display in that room, it actually was the Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves that Lincoln signed there.

Obama will be sworn in on Jan. 20, and he said he wants to work quickly to make the White House "green."

The president-elect said he plans to sit down with the chief usher for the presidential mansion and do an evaluation of its energy efficiency.

"Part of what I want to do is to show the American people that it's not that hard," Obama said.

Asked whether he'll be tiptoeing around at night, turning off the lights, Obama said he isn't going to be obsessive about it.

"But I do that in my current house," he added, "and there's no reason why I wouldn't do it in my next one."

The full interview airs Wednesday at 10 p.m. EST.

ACROSS THE NATION

Jury convicts mom of lesser charges in online hoax

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Missouri mother on trial in a landmark cyberbullying case was convicted Wednesday of only three minor offenses for her role in a mean-spirited Internet hoax that apparently drove a 13-year-old girl to suicide. The federal jury could not reach a verdict on the main charge against 49-year-old Lori Drew—conspiracy—and rejected three other felony counts of accessing computers without authorization to inflict emotional harm. Instead, the panel found Drew guilty of three misdemeanor offenses of accessing computers without authorization. Each count is punishable by up to a year in prison and a $100,000 fine. Drew could have gotten 20 years if convicted of the four original charges. U.S. District Judge George Wu declared a mistrial on the conspiracy count. There was no immediate word on whether prosecutors would retry her. "I don't have any satisfaction in the jury's decision," said Drew's lawyer, Dean Steward. "I don't think these charges should have ever been brought." Tina Meier, the mother of the dead girl, said Drew deserves the maximum of three years behind bars. "For me it's never been about vengeance," she said. "This is about justice."

Web searches revealed in missing Fla. girl case

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Someone performed Internet searches for "neck breaking" and "household weapons" on the home computer of a Florida mother charged with killing her missing 3-year-old daughter, according to court documents released Wednesday. The Orange County State Attorney's office released almost 800 pages of discovery documents in the case of 22-year-old Casey Anthony, who has pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder and other charges in the June disappearance of her daughter Caylee. In mid-March, someone used the Anthonys' home laptop to search Google and Wikipedia for peroxide, shovels, acetone, alcohol and chloroform. Traces of chloroform, which is used to induce unconsciousness and also a component of human decomposition, were found in the trunk of Casey Anthony's car during forensic testing, the documents say. Caylee has not been seen since June, but she wasn't reported missing until a month later. The child's grandmother first called authorities in July to say she hadn't seen Caylee for a month and her daughter's car smelled like death.

Barbara Bush doing well after surgery

HOUSTON (AP)—Former first lady Barbara Bush was expected to remain in a Houston hospital for the next week as she recovers from laparoscopic surgery for a perforated ulcer, her surgeon said Wednesday. "She did well through the surgery and she continues to do very well," said Dr. Pat Reardon, who operated on the 83-year-old former first lady at The Methodist Hospital. The surgery, performed through a small incision in the abdomen, lasted several hours and was completed by around 1:30 a.m. Wednesday. Surgeons cleansed her abdominal area with fluid and closed a nearly six-tenths of an inch hole caused by the ulcer, Reardon said. Family spokesman Jim McGrath said Bush had had minor pain for several days but that by Tuesday she needed medical attention. Reardon said Bush declared that "this was the worst pain she ever had, worse than childbirth," and had the Secret Service bring her to the hospital. If not properly treated, perforated ulcers can be life threatening, he said.

Former Alaska hospital employee shoots supervisors

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—A worker returned to an Alaska hospital a day after being fired and unleashed a shooting spree that left one of his ex-supervisors dead and another critically wounded before he was fatally shot by state police. Joseph Marchetti, armed with a rifle and handgun, fired multiple shots just before 10 a.m. Wednesday inside Central Peninsula Hospital in Soldotna, a small community southwest of Anchorage, authorities said. The gunfire sent people scattering, hospital spokeswoman Bonnie Nichols said. "People were running for their lives," she said. The two hospital employees shot by Marchetti had been his former supervisors. Mike Webb, 55, died two hours after the shooting, Nichols said. Margaret Stroup, 57, shot multiple times in the chest, was listed in critical condition and was to be flown to a hospital in Anchorage, she said. Webb was the hospital's information services director and Stroup is the imaging services director.

California burn areasescape storm damage

SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP)—Weary residents ordered to evacuate during heavy overnight rains returned home Wednesday as the threat of mudslides and flash flooding in Southern California's wildfire burn areas eased on the eve of Thanksgiving. All 1,500 people ordered to leave their homes in the Orange County city of Yorba Linda were allowed back in and no major flooding was reported in the hilly suburban communities that burned so dramatically earlier this month. Northwest of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara County officials lifted evacuation orders for residents of about 2,200 homes. Many had fled their homes for the second time in a month.

Reno cops identify suspect in student killing case

RENO, Nev. (AP)—Police in Reno, Nev., have released the identity of a suspect in the January kidnapping and slaying of a 19-year-old college student who was abducted as she slept on a friend's couch. Police say James Michael Biela, 27, of Sparks, was arrested Tuesday night and booked on suspicion of kidnapping, murder and sexual assault. Biela provided a DNA sample that matched evidence found at the scene where Brianna Denison's body was found in February, a Denison family member said Wednesday. Denison was abducted before dawn on Jan. 20 as she slept on the couch at a home near the University of Nevada, Reno. Investigators said DNA evidence gathered from the scene linked Denison's killer to at least two other sexual attacks on women at or near the university from October to December 2007.

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP09-COURTS-014

SUBMISSION: DECEMBER 19, 2008 • TIME: 10:00 AM

"JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR THE GUMA HUSTISIA/ IIMWAL AWEEWEE/HOUSE OF JUSTICE"

THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE SUPREME COURT, CLERK OF COURT, AT THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE GUMA HUSTISIA/IIMWAL AWEEWEE/HOUSE OF JUSTICE IN SUSUPE, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD ON DECEMBER 05, 2008, LOCAL TIME, 10:30 A.M., AT THE GUMA HUSTISIA CONFERENCE ROOM. ANY QUESTIONS OR INQUIRIES SHALL BE DIRECTED TO MS. TRACY M. GUERRERO, DIRECTOR OF COURTS AT (670) 236-9800 OR BY FAX TO (670) 236-9702 NO LATER THAN **DECEMBER 10, 2008**, CLOSE OF BUSINESS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL IF PREFERENCED IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **MIGUEL S. DEMAPAN**
Chief Justice

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

San Vicente School Community Based Management, Inc.

INVITATION TO BID

ITB No: ITB-08-001
Submission/Opening date: November 24, 2008 Time: 10:00A.M.
Closing Date: December 1, 2008 Time: 10:00A.M.

Subject: Drilling of deep well at San Vicente Elementary School Campus for Brackish Water.

Copies of the specification may be picked up at the San Vicente Elementary School Office or for information, please fax questions to 664-3985 / Attention: Valrich Welch.

Preference is available to U.S. citizens or permanent residents a per public law 15-95 and as further amended by public law 15-118 and must be submitted with the proposal if preference is claimed.

This project is funded by Administration for Native Americans (ANA) and therefore preference is given to Native Islanders and other Native Americans (Hawaiian, Samoan, or any of the Native American Tribes).

/s/ Agnes McPheteres
Chairwoman, SVSCBM, Inc.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 664-3500/1 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
MOWING, TRIMMING AND CLEANING OF PROPERTY GROUNDS
And
PERIMETER FENCE AND DITCH GRASS CUTTING

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed cost proposals for (A) Mowing of grass, trimming of flowers, bushes and trees and cleaning of the airport grounds and (B) Perimeter Fence and Ditch Grass Cutting. The sealed cost proposals in duplicates are due by **4:30 p.m., Friday, December 19, 2008** at the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport. The scope of work and contract documents shall be ready for pick up at the above said office by Monday, December 1, 2008.

Proposers may submit for both Part A and Part B, or proposers may submit for only one part, either A or B if desired. Part A is the first project and is labeled "SIA Mowing, Trimming and Cleaning of Property Grounds." Part B is the second project and is labeled "SIA Perimeter Fence and Ditch Grass Cutting."

A pre-proposal conference will be held at 10:00 am on Wednesday, December 10, 2008 at the CPA Airport Conference. Attendance at this pre-proposal conference is mandatory to be considered for the services.

Please make arrangements with the Airport Manager at telephone number 664-3500 for a site visit to better understand the scope of work and to identify the areas depicted on the sketch.

Along with your proposal, the submission of insurance coverage, company past performance, experience, a list of equipment and most recent financial statement reviewed by a Certified Public Accountant, are required to completely determine the company's capability to perform the work. The successful proposer shall enter into an agreement with CPA for a one-year term which is renewable thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date for another year or as determined by CPA. The renewal of agreement shall be contingent upon CPA's satisfaction of the company's performance and the availability of funding.

CPA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals if in its sole decision to do so, is in its best interest.

/s/ EFRAIN F. CAMACHO, P.E.
Executive Director

Date: November 26, 2008

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 664-3500/1 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

PUBLIC NOTICE

SOLICITATION FOR PROPOSALS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA), a public corporation of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, hereby solicits proposals to lease and/or develop the following properties:

1. Lot No. 062 E 03; containing an area of approximately 1,725 square meters; two butler – type buildings, situated at the Saipan Seaport.
2. Lot No. 090 E 02; containing an area of approximately 1,958 square meters; adjacent to FAS Moving; situated at the Saipan Seaport.
3. Lot No. 193 E 05; containing an area of approximately 6,455 square meters; North Sea Plane Ramp; Saipan Seaport.
4. Lot No. 193 E 06; containing an area of approximately 5,163 square meters; North Sea Plane Ramp; Saipan Seaport.
5. Lot No. 066 E 01; containing an area of approximately 1,371 square meters; North Sea Plane Ramp; Saipan Seaport.

Interested parties may obtain a Proposal Package from the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. A fee of $35.00 shall be charged for each copy of the proposal package. Checks should be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The Proposal Package must be submitted to the Office of the Executive Director between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on or before December 12, 2008.

For more information, contact the Manager, Port of Saipan at 664-3550.

/s/ EFRAIN F. CAMACHO, P.E.
Executive Director

Date: November 24, 2008

Saipan Cockpit Board
Municipality of Saipan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Mayor Juan B. Tudela, Through the Municipality of Saipan, hereby gives notice that the Saipan Cockfighting Board will hold its **Regular** meeting on **Friday, November 28, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.** at the Saipan Mayor's Office Conference Room, 1st Floor, Afetnas Building, San Antonio, Saipan.

I. Preliminary Matters
- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Adoption of Interim Rules
  - i. Bylaws
- d. Adoption of Agenda

II. Public Comments

III. New Business
- a. Proposed Regulation Amendments
- b. November 16, 2008 Hackfight Protest (Dris v. Bricia)
- c. Licensee Protest

IV. Executive Session

V. Miscellaneous
- a. Announcements
- b. Next meeting
- c. Adjourment

Asia

Gunmen kill at least 101 in rampage across Mumbai

MUMBAI, India (AP)—Teams of gunmen stormed luxury hotels, a popular restaurant, hospitals and a crowded train station in coordinated attacks across India's financial capital, killing at least 101 people, taking Westerners hostage and leaving parts of the city under siege Thursday, police said. A group of suspected Muslim militants claimed responsibility.

Police and gunmen were exchanging occasional gunfire at two luxury hotels and an unknown number of people were held hostage, said A.N. Roy, a top police official. Pradeep Indulkar, a senior official at the Maharashtra state Home Ministry said 101 people were killed and 287 injured.

Officials said at least 6 militants had also been killed since the overnight attacks began around 9:30 p.m.

Mid-morning Thursday, police loudspeakers declared a curfew around Mumbai's landmark Taj Mahal hotel, and black-clad commandos ran into the building as fresh gunshots rang out from the area, apparently the beginning of an assault on gunmen who had taken hostages in the hotel.

Ambulances were seen driving up to the entrance to the hotel and journalists were made to move even further back from the area.

A series of explosions had rocked the Taj Mahal just after midnight. Screams were heard and black smoke billowed from the century-old edifice on Mumbai's waterfront. Firefighters sprayed water at the blaze and plucked people from balconies with extension ladders. By dawn, the fire was still burning.

The attackers specifically targeted Britons and Americans at the hotels and restaurant, witnesses said. Officials said at least 120 people were wounded.

Alex Chamberlain, a British citizen who was dining at the upscale Oberoi hotel, told Sky News television that a gunman ushered 30 to 40 people from the restaurant into a stairway and, speaking in Hindi or Urdu, ordered everyone to put up their hands.

"They were talking about British and Americans specifically. There was an Italian guy, who, you know, they said: 'Where are you from?" and he said he's from Italy and they said 'fine' and they left him alone. And I thought: 'Fine, they're going to shoot me if they ask me anything—and thank God they didn't," he said.

Chamberlain said he managed to slip away as the patrons were forced to walk up stairs, but he thought much of the group was being held hostage.

The motive for the onslaught was not immediately clear, but Mumbai has frequently been targeted in terrorist attacks blamed on Islamic extremists, including a series of bombings in July 2006 that killed 187 people.

Early Thursday, state home secretary Bipin Shrimali said four suspects had been killed in two incidents when they tried to flee in cars, and Roy said two more gunmen were killed at the Taj Mahal. State Home Minister R.R. Patil said nine more were arrested. They declined to provide any further details.

"We're gong to catch them dead or alive," Patil told reporters. "An attack on Mumbai is an attack on the rest of the country."

An Indian media report said a previously unknown group calling itself the Deccan Mujahideen had claimed responsibility for the attacks in e-mails to several media outlets. There was no way to verify that claim.

AP

Fire engulfs a part of the Taj Hotel in Mumbai, India, Thursday, Nov. 27, 2008. Teams of heavily armed gunmen stormed luxury hotels, a popular restaurant, hospitals and a crowded train station in coordinated attacks across India's financial capital Wednesday night, killing at least 78 people and taking Westerners hostage, police said.

A look at some major attacks in India

Some major attacks in India since 2005, most blamed on Islamic militants:

- Nov. 26, 2008: Series of shooting and grenade attacks, including two on luxury hotels, kill at least 78 people and wound at least 200 in Mumbai, India's main commercial city.
- Sept. 13, 2008: At least five explosions in crowded shopping areas kill 21 and wound 100 in New Delhi, national capital.
- July 26, 2008: Some 16 small bombs explode in Ahmedabad, killing 45.
- July 25, 2008: Seven small bombs kill two in Bangalore, hub of India's technology industry.
- May 13, 2008: Seven bombs hit crowded markets and streets outside Hindu temples in Jaipur, killing 80.
- Nov. 24, 2007: Nearly simultaneous explosions rip courthouse complexes in Lucknow, Varanasi and Faizabad, killing 16.
- Aug. 25, 2007: 43 people killed by three explosions at park and street-side food stall in Hyderabad.
- May 18, 2007: Bomb during Friday prayers at historic mosque in Hyderabad kills 11 worshippers. Police later fatally shoot five people during clashes with Muslims protesting attack.
- Feb. 19, 2007: Train heading from India to Pakistan torn apart by two bombs, sparking fire that kills 68.
- July 11, 2006: Seven blasts rip through rail stations and commuter trains in Mumbai, killing 187.
- March 7, 2006: Three explosions rock Hindu temple and train station in Hindu holy city of Varanasi, killing 20.
- Oct. 29, 2005: 62 killed by three blasts at markets in New Delhi ahead of Hindu holiday of Diwali.

Protesters force second Thai airport to shut down

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—Thai authorities shut down Bangkok's second airport Thursday after it was overrun by anti-government protesters, completely cutting off the capital from air traffic as the prime minister rejected their demands to resign, deepening the country's crisis.

Thailand's powerful army commander, who has remained neutral in the conflict, stepped into the fray Wednesday, urging Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat to step down.

He also asked thousands of protesters to end their siege of the main international Suvarnabhumi airport. It has been shut since Tuesday night, leaving hundreds of flights canceled and drawing world attention to a turmoil that has reduced Thailand to a dysfunctional nation.

The anti-government protests, which gathered pace four months ago, have paralyzed the government, battered the stock market, spooked foreign investors and dealt a serious blow to the tourism industry.

The crisis worsened early Thursday as authorities shut down the Don Muang domestic airport, which had been receiving some diverted flights from Suvarnabhumi.

Serirat Prasutanont, chief of Thailand Airport Authority, said authorities feared that protesters who stormed the Don Muang terminal building late Wednesday might harm passengers and aircraft.

He said authorities might consider using the U Ta Pao air force base, 140 kilometers (90 miles) southeast of Bangkok, and were alerting airports nationwide to be ready to receive more diverted flights.

China blames France, EU for summit cancellation

BEIJING (AP)—China said French President Nicolas Sarkozy's planned meeting with the Dalai Lama, Beijing's hated foe, left it no option but to pull out of an upcoming China-European Union summit.

Sarkozy's decision had "deprived the EU-China summit of the required good atmosphere and made it impossible for it to obtain the anticipated result," Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said Thursday in a statement posted on the ministry's Web site.

"We resolutely oppose the Dalai traveling to other countries in any capacity to carry out activities aimed at splitting China. We resolutely oppose foreign leaders having any form of contact with the Dalai," Qin said.

The cancellation, first announced Wednesday by the would-be summit host France, was a dramatic example of the lengths to which Beijing will go to try to internationally isolate Tibet's exiled Buddhist leader.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Afghan police: Car bomb explodes near US Embassy

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Afghan police say a suicide car bomb has exploded about 200 yards (meters) outside the main entrance to the U.S. Embassy in Kabul in an attack against an American convoy. Kabul police chief Mohammad Ayub Salangi says one person was killed and six wounded in the attack. Police officer Abdul Manan says the attack appears to have been a suicide car bomb. The U.S. Embassy was hosting a Thanksgiving Day footrace, and Americans and other Westerners were entering the embassy compound at the time of the explosion.

Rocket hits NATO truck depot in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—Suspected militants fired a rocket Wednesday that hit a terminal for trucks carrying supplies to NATO and U.S. troops in Afghanistan, underscoring the insurgents increasing hold over parts of northwest Pakistan. The rocket was one of two fired late in the day in the region's capital, Peshawar, said police officer Abdul Qadirwhich. The city, which sits along the supply route from Pakistan to Afghanistan, has seen an upsurge in violence in recent weeks, including the slaying of an American working on a U.S-funded aid project. Neither of the rockets caused serious damage or any injuries, he said. Qadir said officers were not sure whether the truck terminal was the target of the attack. The rockets are normally fired into the city from hills on its outskirts some 10 kilometers (7 miles) away.

Elephant rampage leaves 1 dead in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—A man was trampled to death and a home destroyed after sixteen wild elephants rampaged through a village on Indonesia's Sumatra island, officials said Wednesday. Villagers in Aceh province's Cot Pangee tried for days to scare away the elephants, yelling and making loud noises, but the animals instead became more aggressive, said Andi Basrul, of the Conservation and Natural Resources Agency. Over the weekend, one elephant trampled to death a 30-year-old man and a group of 15 animals destroyed a house and tore through several acres (hectares) of farmland Tuesday, he said. Authorities Wednesday were still trying to chase the elephants back into the forest, but heavy rain and flooding were hampering those efforts, Basrul said.

World

Raul Castro to Sean Penn: he'd meet Obama at Gitmo

HAVANA (AP)—Cuban President Raul Castro said in an interview released Wednesday that he would like to meet President-elect Barack Obama on "neutral ground"—and he suggested the American naval base at Guantanamo Bay.

The Cuban leader's offer came in a rare interview in Havana with actor-director Sean Penn, who wrote about it for the Dec. 15 edition of The Nation magazine. The article was released on the magazine's Web site Wednesday.

Penn asked if Castro would meet with Obama in Washington. The Cuban president said he "would have to think about it," but that it would not be fair for either leader to go to the other's territory. Instead he suggested the base at Guantanamo.

"We must meet and begin to solve our problems, and at the end of the meeting, we could give the president a gift ... we could send him home with the American flag that waves over Guantanamo Bay," Castro said.

Castro

Raul Castro is largely seen as more pragmatic and conciliatory than his fiery older brother Fidel, and has offered to meet with U.S. officials several times since replacing his ailing sibling in mid-2006.

Cuba's main focus in such a meeting would be on normalizing trade, Castro said.

"The only reason for the blockade is to hurt us," he told Penn, using the term the communist leadership employs for the five-decade-old U.S. trade embargo. "Nothing can deter the revolution. Let Cubans come to visit with their families. Let Americans come to Cuba."

Obama has said he is willing to meet with Raul Castro without preconditions, and that after taking office on Jan. 20 he would "immediately" lift all restrictions on family travel and remittances to Cuba. Under tough rules imposed under President George W. Bush, Cuban Americans can now visit their relatives on the island only once every three years.

WORLD BRIEFS

UN investigating possible war crimes in Congo

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—U.N. officials have opened investigations into whether war crimes have been committed in eastern Congo, saying they have alarming evidence of targeted killings and possibly massacres of civilians. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon raised the possibility of war crimes and crimes against humanity in a report Wednesday to the Security Council that recommends U.N. peacekeepers who make up the world's largest such contingent should remain in Congo through 2009. "The forced displacement of populations and evidence of the targeted killings of civilians are alarming. In the current climate, the possibility of massacres of civilians cannot be ruled out," he said in the report. Alan Doss, the U.N.'s top envoy to Congo, told the council that the peacekeeping force, known as MONUC, had recently opened "several investigations into alleged massacres and extra-judicial executions." "All belligerents have committed serious atrocities against civilians," Doss said. "Women and children have suffered most from the recurrent fighting. Sexual violence is rampant and many armed groups continue to recruit children into their ranks."

Video shows hostage pleaded for release

LONDON (AP)—A French aid worker kidnapped in Afghanistan earlier this month has appeared in a video with two rifles pressed to either side of his head and chains around his legs In the video, obtained by news agencies in Afghanistan, the dirt-streaked man barely seems to open his eyes as he pleads for his release. "I have been here for the last eight days, fully in the black," says the hostage, who identifies himself as Dany Egreteau. Egreteau was captured by gunmen in Kabul Nov. 3 as he drove to work with another aid worker, who managed to escape. An Afghan who tried to prevent the kidnapping was killed. It was unclear when the video was taken, although Egreteau's statement suggests it was shot just over a week after he was ambushed. His voice trembled at times. He refers to a ransom demand, begging for someone to pay it off. A French official said authorities confirmed that the video showed Egreteau. The official would not comment further and spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity surrounding hostage-takings.

Dutch entertainer disputes singing for SS

BERLIN (AP)—A 104-year-old Dutch-born entertainer who made his name performing in Hitler's Germany is trying to clear his name of allegations he sang for Nazi guards at the Dachau concentration camp. Johannes Heesters admits that he visited the notorious camp outside Munich in 1941, but is suing in a civil court in Berlin on Thursday to have a German author and documentary maker retract statements that he entertained the SS troops while there. "It never happened," Heesters said in a lengthy statement explaining his connections to Nazi-era Germany on his Web site. But the author, Volker Kuehn, said he has no intention of taking back the allegation, which he regards as "historical fact." Kuehn bases his information on a 1990 interview with former Dachau inmate Viktor Matejka, a political prisoner who became Vienna's Councilor for Cultural Affairs after the war.

Civilians flee as Congo rebels attack militia

GOMA, Congo (AP)—A rebel offensive to expel some of the perpetrators of Rwanda's 1994 genocide forced more than 3,000 civilians to flee eastern Congo to neighboring Uganda in a single day, the insurgents and U.N. officials said early Thursday.

In New York, the U.N.'s top Congo envoy told the Security Council that peacekeepers have opened several investigations into whether war crimes are being committed in eastern Congo, pointing to evidence of targeted killings. And U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in a report to the Security Council, recommended U.N. peacekeepers should remain in Congo through 2009.

Rebel spokesman Bertrand Bisimwa said the insurgents began an offensive Saturday in Ishasha border town to push some 1,500 Hutu militiamen, many believed to be Rwandan exiles, out of Congo. Ishasha, on Congo's border with Uganda, is about 35 miles (50 kilometers) northeast of the de facto rebel capital, Rutshuru.

Iraqi factions haggle ahead of US pact vote

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq delayed until Thursday a crucial vote in parliament on a pact that would keep U.S. troops in Iraq through 2011 after lawmakers, many of them Sunni Arabs, demanded concessions from the Shiite-led government in return for supporting the deal.

The one-day delay and Wednesday's backroom haggling highlighted Iraq's deep divisions, as well as the fluid and often chaotic nature of its politics nearly six years after the U.S.-led invasion that ousted Saddam Hussein.

In the past, sectarian-based disputes and other quarrels among Iraqi politicians have stalled efforts to achieve national reconciliation, although some key compromises have been achieved. While the country appears to be emerging from years of intense violence, mistrust among key factions that seek to preserve or advance their own interests has slowed political progress.

This time, a longtime Iraqi goal—a clear plan for the departure of foreign forces—is at stake.

The proposed security agreement provides for the first time since the 2003 invasion a timeline for the withdrawal of U.S. troops and offers what Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki describes as a path toward full sovereignty for Iraq.

Under the deal, U.S. forces will withdraw from Iraqi cities by June 30 and the entire country by Jan. 1, 2012. Iraq will also have strict oversight over U.S. forces. The U.N. mandate that currently governs the conduct of American troops gives them freer rein, leading to Iraqi complaints that they are an occupying force intent on preserving U.S. interests in the Middle East.

ZONING BOARD MEETING

POSTPONED

This is to advise the general public that the regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board originally scheduled for December 5, 2008 has been postponed. For questions relating to this meeting, or if you require any assistance, please contact the Zoning Office at 234-9661. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).
/s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chair.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education

Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation For Bid
IFB # 09-004

The Public School System is soliciting competitive scaled bids for the purchase, delivery, installation, and assembly of **Computer Softwares and Printer Equipments, Supplies & Accessories for Saipan Southern High School (SSHS).** Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 09-004" containing one (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office, no later than **December 22, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.** Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 09-004 CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (one (1)-original and three (3)-copies). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Juan D. Babauta, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: ***babautajd@pss.cnmi.mp.***

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the CNMI Public School System.

/s/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/s/ Juan D. Babauta
Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer

Science & Technology

Blockbuster to rent via new on-demand device

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Blockbuster Inc. will start renting movies and television shows through a new gadget that may give consumers another reason to bypass the struggling video chain's 7,500 stores.

The new system announced Tuesday relies on a small box that connects to television sets and stores video after it's downloaded over high-speed Internet connections.

The player, made by San Jose-based 2Wire Inc., is built on the same concept as storage devices made by Apple Inc. and Vudu Inc. The devices are all meant to provide a bridge between the Internet and TVs.

Netflix Inc., a Blockbuster nemesis, has been trying to make the same leap with a video-streaming service that can be watched on TV sets through a variety of devices, including a $100 box introduced by Roku Inc. six months ago.

Blockbuster's foray into so-called "on-demand" video also pits the Dallas-based company against instant-gratification services already offered by major cable carriers like Comcast Corp. and Time Warner Inc.

Although the company has closed hundreds of stores in recent years, Blockbuster's expansion into on-demand shouldn't be interpreted as a condemnation of its brick-and-mortar locations, Chairman James Keyes said in an interview.

"We think the stores will remain relevant to consumers for quite some time," he said.

Blockbuster had previously been selling video downloads through Movielink, a service that it bought for $7.7 million last year.

Random House to digitize thousands of books

NEW YORK (AP)—With e-book sales exploding in an otherwise sleepy market, Random House Inc. announced Monday that it was making thousands of additional books available in digital form, including novels by John Updike and Harlan Coben, as well as several volumes of the "Magic Treehouse" children's series.

ON THE NET
http://www.randomhouse.com/

Random House CEO Markus Dohle said in a statement that "more people everyday are enjoying reading in the electronic format and Random House wants to extend our reach to them with more of our books."

The publisher already has more than 8,000 books in the electronic format and will have a digital library of nearly 15,000. The new round of e-books is expected to be completed within months; excerpts can be viewed online through the publisher's Insight browsing service.

Random House's vice president for digital operations, Matt Shatz, says e-book sales have increased by triple digit percentages in 2008, thanks in part to Amazon.com's Kindle reader, but he declined to offer specific number. E-books remain a tiny part of the overall market, widely estimated in the industry at 1 percent or less.

THE HELP FILE

By ROB PEGORARO
(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Q. I've set up a digital TV converter, and I get most of my local stations' digital broadcasts but not all of them. Do any of these broadcasters have upgrades in store for their signals?

A. With few exceptions—low-power stations that relay or carry translated versions of other stations' programming—broadcasters should have brought their digital signals up to full strength months ago. That doesn't mean that they won't continue to fine-tune their digital operations before the Feb. 17 shutoff of their analog broadcasts.

Some stations, however, will also change frequencies overnight on that date. They will move their digital broadcasts from UHF, or ultra-high-frequency, airwaves (channel 14 and up) to VHF, or very-high-frequency, channels (2 to 13) that their analog signals once occupied. Viewers won't have to learn new numbers because tuners already ignore these frequency assignments to label digital signals as if they were only a decimal point away from a station's original analog channel number.

The different characteristics of VHF signals may, however, yield a notable improvement in reception.

You can look up these moves at antennaweb.org, a site run by the Consumer Electronics Association and the National Association of Broadcasters to help viewers pick out antennas. Enter your address or just your Zip code, let the site map out your reception, then click the "Show Digital Stations Only" button above its list of stations. Some will show up a second time, with "Feb 17, 2009 (post-transition)" under the "Live Date" heading and a channel from 2 to 13 in the "Frequency Assignment" column.

This list also indicates that other stations will make smaller adjustments, such as moving digital broadcasts to a different antenna.

■■■

Q. I have a new LCD monitor hooked up to my PC, but it doesn't look as nice as I thought. The text seems a little unfocused, and images look a little wide.

A. Liquid-crystal display screens, unlike old-fashioned cathode-ray tubes, only look their best at one resolution. But if you plug one into a PC without changing this setting, you may see text that looks blurry or dim. And if the LCD has wider proportions than its predecessor, everything on the screen can also appear slightly stretched out.

To fix this in Windows XP, right-click on a blank area of the desktop and select Properties, then click the Properties window's Settings tab. (In Vista, right-click the desktop, select Personalize and click Display Settings; in Mac OS X, open System Preferences and click Displays.) Now, move the slider labeled "Resolution" or "Resolutions" to a higher setting, assuming you traded up to a bigger screen.

Your new display's resolution should be listed in its manual or on its box. If you can't consult either, try these common settings: a 17-inch widescreen LCD usually runs at 1,440 by 900 pixels, 20-inch widescreen displays often hit 1,680 by 1,050 pixels, and 19-inch widescreen monitors may prefer either of those values.

■■■

Q. My children gave me a new Gateway computer, but I can't plug in my old laser printer because this PC doesn't have a parallel port. Is there a conversion kit I could buy?

A. USB-to-parallel adapters, at $20 to $30 each, can bridge this type of gap. But you'll also need software drivers to let the computer talk to the printer.

Windows Vista may be able to handle that job on its own, and you can also check with the printer vendor. This can be tricky work; you might want to ask your kids to take care of it as Part Two of your gift.

Off the Wall

Why won't two polar bears mate? They're both female

TOKYO (AP)—Puzzled Japanese zookeepers have cleared up a mystery over a lack of chemistry between a couple of polar bears as both turn out to be female, a Japanese zoo said Wednesday. Tsuyoshi, a four-year-old "male" polar bear, and his 11-year-old female partner, Kurumi, have been living together since June at the Kushiro Municipal Zoo in Hokkaido, northern Japan.

AP

Tsuyoshi, a four-year-old "male" polar bear, is seen at Kushiro Municipal Zoo in Kushiro, northern Japan in March, 2008.

But much to the frustration and puzzlement of zookeepers, the bear couple, on a breeding mission, showed no signs of chemistry, and Tsuyoshi has never gone into rut even during "his" mating period.

"Observing his behaviors, we got suspicious as to whether Tsuyoshi was really a male," the zoo said in a statement.

The zoo put Tsuyoshi under an anesthetic earlier in the month for a gender checkup, and learned he was a she.

"I have mixed feelings," Yoshio Yamaguchi, head of the zoo.

Tsuyoshi is very popular at the zoo, and Kyodo News agency said the zoo would not change his name to a female name. Tsuyoshi is a very common Japanese name for boys.

Experts say when polar bears are young, it is difficult to determine their gender as their long hair covers reproductive organs.

The zoo said it had determined Tsuyoshi was a male three months after his birth.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Thief uses lubricant to swipe ring on woman's hand

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—Police said a thief used a Vaseline-like lubricant to swipe an expensive ring off an elderly woman's hand in broad daylight. Authorities said two men bumped 80-year-old Helen Artim's car, then asked her to open her trunk to check for damage. Police said the suspect ran his hand over hers, covering it with "some type of lubricant," then used a towel to wipe it off. It's then that police believe he slipped the ring off Artim's finger. The piece of jewelry was valued between $20,000 to $30,000. No arrests in the Nov. 14 incident have been made.

Ohio police dog bites man accused of dogfighting

DAYTON, Ohio (AP)—Authorities said a police dog bit and helped apprehend a Dayton man wanted on dogfighting charges. Dayton police Lt. Patrick Welsh said a 31-year-old man fled on foot Sunday as officers were responding to a call. Welsh said the dog grabbed the man on the wrist so officers could arrest him. The suspect was treated for bites to his hand and taken to jail on previously filed charges of dogfighting.

Man stabbed for 2nd time in less than a month

LEWISTON, Maine (AP)—For the second time in less than a month, Zachary Duprey was the victim of a stabbing in downtown Lewiston. Police said the 21-year-old man was stabbed twice in the back early Tuesday at Del's Bar & Grille. Duprey was treated at Central Maine Medical Center and released. It was not clear what led to the stabbing, and police said the investigation was continuing. Duprey was stabbed twice in the thigh on Oct. 30 while in a street fight with another man. Police said a third man who jumped in and stabbed Duprey was later charged with elevated aggravated assault.

Ark. man arrested after scratching out sentence

FORREST CITY, Ark. (AP)—A man reportedly caught trying to scratch out a judicial decision sending him to jail faces a new charge. Police said the 25-year-old man received a four-day jail sentence along with a $650 fine Monday from St. Francis County District Judge Steve Routon for driving on a suspended license and hazardous driving. Officers said Routon told the man to turn in a notice listing his sentence to the clerk's office. A clerk told police she saw the man scratch something off the notice. When an officer looked at the notice, they saw the four-day sentence had been scratched through. Police say the man is now charged with tampering with a public record.

Teen gets time for grandma in 'gangster rap' video

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—A Florida teenager has been sentenced to 18 months in juvenile detention for coaxing his senile grandmother into holding a gun and threatening to shoot "all the pigs" in a homemade "gangster rap" video. Eighteen-year-old Michael Alfinez pleaded guilty Tuesday to elder abuse charges. His family has said the case was a misunderstanding. The 85-year-old grandmother can be seen in the video holding a handgun, wearing a black mask and threatening to shoot "all the pigs." Alfinez was arrested in April after authorities seized the tape during a routine traffic stop. Alfinez and others also could be seen in the video shooting a pistol around town.

Woman with cast on foot allegedly kicks girl, cops

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. (AP)—A woman wearing a cast on her foot has been charged with assault for allegedly kicking an 8-year-old girl and police officers. City police say they found the 32-year-old woman hiding under a bed in an apartment as they investigated a neighbor's complaint about a child being assaulted Monday. Police said that when they pulled the woman out from under the bed, she kicked a sergeant and some officers. Authorities said the girl told them that the suspect kicked her and threw her into a bedroom dresser, causing bruises on her legs and back. The woman was charged with assaulting police officers, assaulting the child and other crimes.

Life & Style

Solid or striped? Woman blogs about Williams' ties

AP

Workers prepare Beethoven, the St. Bernard dog balloon for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2008 in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Each night after watching Brian Williams deliver the "NBC Nightly News," an English teacher in Ohio is moved to go to her computer and write—about what Williams wore around his neck. The Brian Williams Tie Report Archive isn't the weirdest thing you'll find online, but it's up there. It's a snarky, occasionally appreciative and flat-out funny read that will have you looking at Williams as never before.

"People must think 'This poor woman must be one of those stalker freaks,' but it can't be any further from the truth," said Nance Donnelly, author of the blog, who will only say she lives in northeast Ohio.

She's always found ties slightly ridiculous. Donnelly used to notice former Cleveland Cavaliers coach Mike Fratello's neckwear, but after he left she transferred her attention to the usually impeccably dressed Williams.

The report has a sense of history, from Williams' "Mango Madness Episode" in summer 2007 to the memorable week she caught him wearing the same tie twice in four days.

She liked Williams' purple tie of Nov. 17, saying it was "almost a whispery confection of a cravat ... a tie which looks like sugared violets adorning the tops of fancy cupcakes served to Ladies Who Lunch or the tiered cake of a Southern bride whose wedding breakfast is held at a gracious hotel."

AP

In this Oct. 24, 2008 file photo, NBC news anchor Brian Williams attends the Friars Club Roast of NBC "Today" host Matt Lauer in New York.

The Navy blue with silver stripes number he wore Nov. 14 "is the cardigan sweater of ties, the Grandpa of Fashion, the warm mug of cocoa in a world of fancy schmancy soya lattes with no foam. And in these uncertain economic times, we need a Rock of Gibraltar-esque cravat."

Three ties she despises are in Williams' "Axis of Evil." A pedestrian tie worn too frequently is "TWSNLBRAINDTM," or Tie Which Shall No Longer Be Reviewed And Is Now Dead To Me.

Donnelly is still recovering from the orchid tie Williams wore on Nov. 14. She wrote:

"Those Crayola blue stripes that seemed to run and blur at the right edge of this unholy cravat gave the whole broadcast a weird, Dali-esque vibe, and I kept watching and waiting for the rest of his tie to start melting and running off his shirt and onto the news desk into a puddle of purple and blue."

Williams seems particularly fixated on purple and stripes, she said.

"He only has one green tie," she said. "That's a serious fashion gap."

Silly? Of course. That's what makes it fun. She's also teaching her students by example that if you want to be a writer, write every day.

Williams knows the site.

As a former Catholic high school student, ties are second nature. Ask most days what he's wearing, and he'd have to look down to check. He buys most of his ties, and his wife buys some.

3 new giant balloons to join Macy's parade lineup

NEW YORK (AP)—An astronaut, an elephant and a Smurf are joining Macy's Thanksgiving parade this year. Giant balloons of Buzz Lightyear, Horton the elephant of Dr. Seuss fame and one of the blue creatures popularized on the TV show "The Smurfs" will take their place among dozens of other balloons on the 2.5-mile route down Broadway.

About 3.5 million spectators are expected to watch the 82nd annual parade in person, with another 50 million tuning in on television to catch a glimpse of 28 floats, 10 marching bands and performances by Miley Cyrus, Trace Adkins, James Taylor and the Radio City Rockettes.

"We see the parade as a huge pageant of American culture," said executive producer Robin Hall.

The National Weather Service was forecasting a sunny, seasonable day with roughly 10 mph winds, well below city guidelines for grounding the balloons.

Those rules were established after 45 mph winds drove a Cat in the Hat balloon into a metal pole during the 1997 parade, leaving a woman in a coma.

The festivities began Wednesday evening, when workers inflated the 13 giant and 31 smaller balloons. Each giant requires more than 5,000 cubic feet of helium.

Also among the newcomers was a smaller balloon paying tribute to graffiti artist Keith Haring, who died in 1990.

Haring's father, sister and other relatives will escort the inflated version of his drawing "Untitled (Figure with Heart)," Hall said. It is the third in a series of balloons based on contemporary art. The parade requires 200,000 to 300,000 cubic feet of helium, much of which supplier Linde North America will try to recover and recycle, said company official Nick Haines.

Linde tested the process—sucking the gas out of the balloons, compressing it and later purifying it for resale—last year and hopes to expand it to all but the giant balloons Thursday, he said.

In another novelty, the parade lineup includes the first float sponsored by an Indian tribe—the Oneida Indian Nation of upstate New York.

The parade provides a coveted yearly spotlight for Broadway productions. This year, cast members of "Hair," "In the Heights," "The Little Mermaid," "South Pacific" and "Irving Berlin's White Christmas" were slated to perform.

The parade, which began in 1924 and was canceled for two years during World War II, ends up in front of Macy's flagship store in Herald Square. Macy's is marking its 150th anniversary this year.

What are the best Thanksgiving videos on the Web?

When thinking about film and Thanksgiving, one's thoughts inevitably turn to the Little Tramp.

There is no greater portrayal of Turkey Day than the legendary scene in Charlie Chaplin's "The Gold Rush" (1925).

In the scene, Chaplin and his fellow prospector Big Jim find themselves nearing starvation while huddled in a remote Alaskan cabin on Thanksgiving. The Tramp improvises a meal by cooking his shoe—a perfect representation of just how little Chaplin needed to conjure a little magic.

That clip is one of the many old Chaplin scenes you can find on YouTube. In its spirit, here are a handful of other memorable Thanksgiving videos that can be found online:

■ 2008's most famous Turkey Day video, like "The Gold Rush," comes by way of Alaska. After Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin pardoned a turkey at a farm outside Wasilla last Thursday, she had the misfortune of speaking to reporters in front of a man slaughtering turkeys—an irony captured by cameras from the Anchorage Daily News and others. The video has been more ubiquitous than even her postelection media blitz. If you haven't seen it by now, be warned of its graphic nature.

■ What's more Thanksgiving than football? NFL games on Turkey Day are as much a part of the day as the feast—and one of the most memorable postgame press conferences happened on Thanksgiving weekend in 2001. Jim Mora, then coach of the Indianapolis Colts, had just lost to the San Francisco 49ers when he responded incredulously to a question about his team's playoffs chances. Repeating "Playoffs?" over and over, he created a YouTube moment before the site existed. It's there now.

■ For some, it's Thanksgiving tradition to listen to Arlo Guthrie's "Alice's Restaurant," the singer's comic and poignant 19-minute-long song and monologue. Guthrie's story begins on a Thanksgiving Day in 1965 and is perhaps best heard on the live recording from his 1967 album of the same name. But if you can't find it on the radio on Thanksgiving, there's a good enough 2005 rendition on YouTube.

■ Another Thanksgiving song is, well, "The Thanksgiving Song." Back when he was on "Saturday Night Live," Sandler memorialized the holiday with an ode to it. Finding the video of his performance is a little tricky, but the song can be purchased for download on Amazon and iTunes. (More recent "SNL" Thanksgiving-themed sketches—like Vincent Price's Thanksgiving Special—can be watched on Hulu.com.)

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation For Bid
IFB # 09-003

The Public School System is soliciting competitive scaled bids for the purchase, delivery, installation, and assembly of **Desktop & Laptop Computer Systems and Accessories for Saipan Southern High School (SSHS).** Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 09-003" containing one (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office, no later than **December 15, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.** Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 09-003" CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (one (1)-original and three (3)-copies). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Juan D. Babauta, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: ***babautajd@pss.cnmi.mp.***

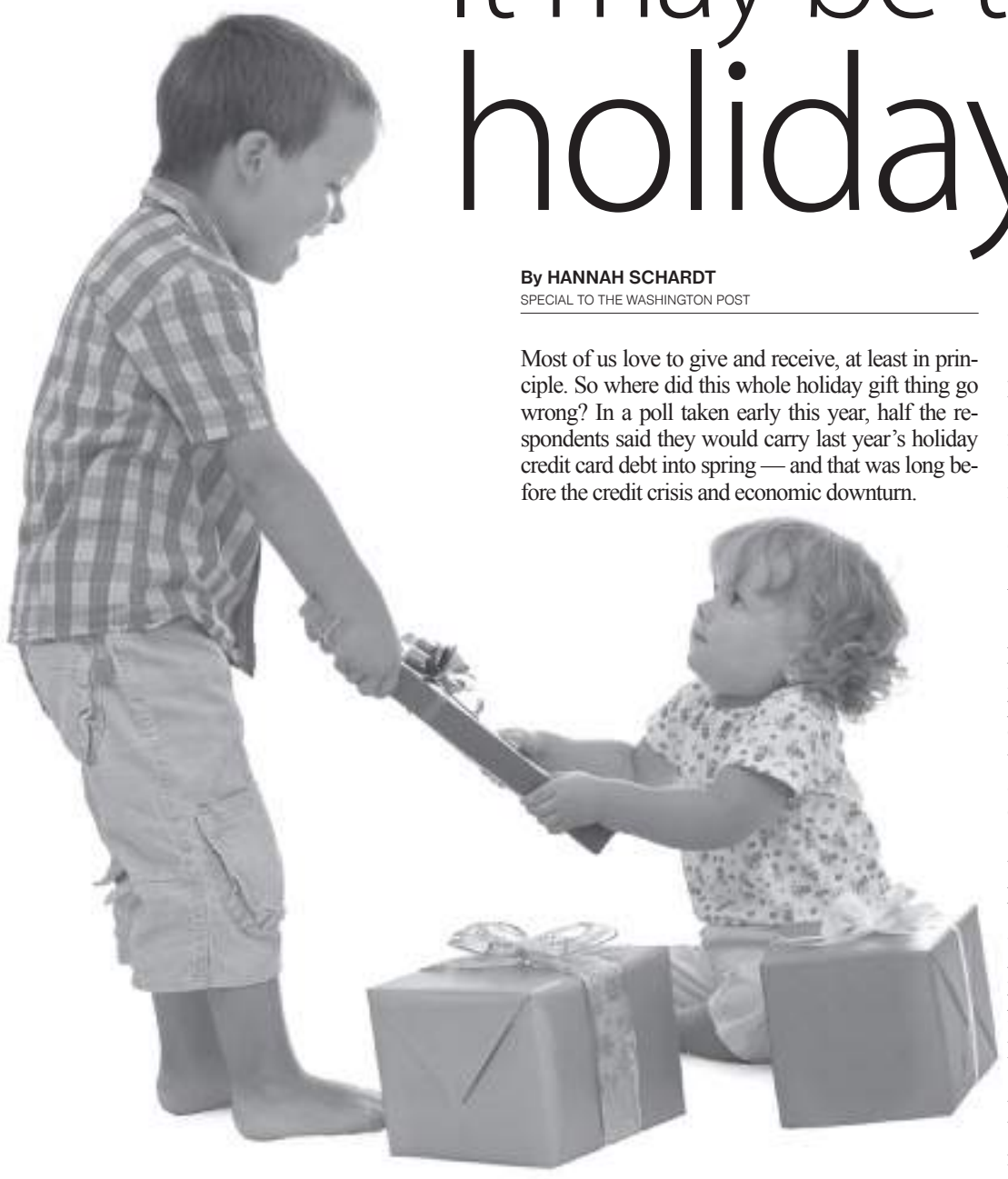
The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or single to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part.. if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the CNMI Public School System.

/s/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/s/ Juan D. Babauta
Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer

It may be time to reconsider holiday gift-giving



By HANNAH SCHARDT
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Most of us love to give and receive, at least in principle. So where did this whole holiday gift thing go wrong? In a poll taken early this year, half the respondents said they would carry last year's holiday credit card debt into spring — and that was long before the credit crisis and economic downturn.

It's not just debt that has Americans feeling not so merry; a 2005 survey found that three-quarters of us think the holidays have become too materialistic. And even the convenience of online shopping has not changed one sad reality: Most of us end up buying some gifts — usually at the last minute — out of desperation.

That is all wrong, says Lisa Wise, executive director of the Center for a New American Dream, a Takoma Park, Md.-based nonprofit group that encourages consumers to be environmentally and socially responsible. She says gift-giving should be thoughtful, not forced.

"We ought to be thinking more about what that person really wants and needs, rather than just giving for the sake of giving," Wise says. Case in point: those stocking stuffers stacked next to every cash register at the mall. People don't buy those trinkets because someone they love really needs a tube of peppermint lip balm, a box of tiny soaps or a tartan plaid headband. They buy them, Wise says, because they have a set amount of money they think they ought to spend, or a set number of presents they think the giftee will expect.

There is another way. Wise calls it being a "conscious consumer," and this might be just the year it finally catches on in a big way. The basic premise: Keep it simple, keep it thoughtful, keep it heartfelt. And don't go into debt in the name of keeping the holidays jolly.

Of course, there is a right way and a wrong way to change holiday traditions. Olivia Doherty, of Upper Marlboro, Md., discovered the wrong way nearly 20 years ago. "My worst Christmas memory as a young kid is when I was about 7. My mother had the brilliant idea of telling all of our relatives to get me and my younger brother gift certificates for Christmas," Doherty says. "There were no presents to open. I never even saw the gift certificates, much less used them, and I can still feel that sinking sadness deep in the gut that I felt that Christmas."

Doherty's experience underlines the most important rule for changing your family's approach to the holidays: Giving and receiving gifts ought to be meaningful and fun.

That said, getting others on board with your plan can be tough. The decision to change the gift-giving traditions of your inner circle is not, unfortunately, one that can be made unilaterally. It's great that you want to knit everyone a tea cozy this year, but what if Grandma is still expecting the annual bottle of eau de toilette? A discussion is in order, and you should be prepared to make your case without coming across like the Grinch.

"Try to personalize the conversation," Wise advises. "Tell them `We're low on time and financially maxed out,' if that's the case. And try to draw the environmental connection. Ask that we not fill up our households with things we know aren't going to be useful."

It's important, though, not to sound like a know-it-all. One tactic to try: "Ask for their ideas first. They may offer suggestions you wouldn't have thought of," Wise says. And be willing to take it slow. Maybe your family can't go from piles of presents to charitable donations in one holiday season, but that's no reason to give up. "New traditions don't happen overnight," Wise says.

Tips for reining in holiday gift-giving

By HANNAH SCHARDT
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Want to keep the holiday crush under control without inciting a family riot? Try suggesting these gift-giving ways.

Set money limits.

It can be tough to stick to a budget when those around you are big spenders. No one wants to hand over a pair of socks and receive a Wii in return (or the reverse, for that matter). If everyone agrees on a reasonable limit beforehand, no one will feel resentful for spending too much or guilty for spending too little. In many families, particularly those that are growing exponentially with in-laws and grandchildren, drawing names may work best. Even if the spending limit is $75, that can still be a bargain when you consider that each member is buying for only one person.

Remember: Less is more, even for kids.

Families with young children may find it useful to cap the number of gifts, not just the monetary value. "It used to be ridiculous the amount of toys and gifts the kids got," says Jennifer Zahradnik, a Washington resident whose husband's family includes 11 grandchildren. "And their parents were sick of having so much stuff." The adults in her family have drawn names for more than a decade; a few years ago the young children started doing the same.

Of course, in many families cutting back may take some getting used to. Michele Borba, a child-development expert and author of several parenting books, including "Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues That Teach Kids to Do the Right Thing," recommends taking baby steps. "Don't do cold turkey," she says. Borba says parents should slowly ease their children into a simpler holiday after a discussion about it. "Sit them down and tell them, `We're cutting back this year,' " she says. "You don't need to be morose. Kids don't need to know how the Dow is doing. But for the most part, kids are pretty accepting" of changes, as long as they understand the reasons.

Chip in, then splurge.

Instead of spending, say, $20 per person for separate gifts, a group of friends or family members should consider pooling resources for something really special. This works well for weddings and birthdays, too. "One year for a friend's 30th birthday, a group of us chipped in and bought a commissioned painting by an artist she admired," says Lisa Wise, of the Center for a New American Dream in Takoma Park, Md. "Years later, she still has it and loves it."

Stuck for splurge-worthy ideas? Try giving an experience. For the spa fanatic, think massage. Or mani-pedi. Or a seaweed body wrap. (Yum.) Shopping for a sports fan? Forget the team jersey; get two tickets to the Nationals' season opener. A child might enjoy tickets to a puppet show or a kid-oriented concert. (If you are taking someone else's child to see the Wiggles perform live, consider it a gift to the parent, too.) For a family, buy a membership to a museum or aquarium.

Ask for contributions.

Alysha Taylor, of Silver Spring, Md., asked her extended family to forgo gifts last Christmas and to help fund a summer trip to a Sesame Street resort in the Caribbean for her, her husband and their two young children. "It's fairly common in our family to group together to buy a larger gift," she says, so she knew the grandparents wouldn't object to this sort of guided giving.

In some families, however, requesting monetary contributions can make for a delicate discussion. Borba recommends using tact and reason. And don't hesitate to delegate the diplomacy: "You may need to have the husband ask his parents and the wife ask hers," she says. In Taylor's case, only her family was asked to contribute. Her husband's family gave other presents, which assuaged her main concern about the trip-as-gift: her 3-year-old son's reaction on Christmas morning. "There was enough stuff under the tree that he didn't miss it," she says.

Spend time, not money.

Remember when you were 10 and out of cash, and had to get your mom a present? Remember how you made coupons that read, "Good for One Back Rub" or "Redeemable for One Hug"? OK, maybe the hug won't cut it anymore, but think of what you do have to offer: Babysitting services for exhausted new parents. Painting assistance for a friend who just bought a house. Pet-sitting for a honeymooning couple. And the back rub still sounds pretty good. If you are afraid that the giftee won't redeem the coupon, try planning ahead and including a date (for example, "Good for Four Hours of Babysitting on March 8"). It can always be renegotiated, and it makes it sound as if you mean it.

Borba says parents should steer grandparents and other family toward giving experiences (see Wiggles show above), rather than toys or clothes. "Talk to your parents about it. Say, `You know what, Mom? What they really want is memories of you. Take them out and do something,' " she says. And if the gift-giver is reluctant to show up empty-handed on Christmas morning, he or she can give a small concrete symbol as well: a stuffed panda for a trip to the zoo, a football for the big game. Borba is also a fan of giving lessons (violin, ballet, baseball) provided the receiver has shown an interest. Such a present, she says, can serve as a "connector" between the giver and the receiver, particularly when the receiver is, say, a 7-year-old boy who only wants to talk baseball, even to Grammy.

Make it yourself.

With a little time and maybe just a little skill, most adults can create something desirable with their hands: a framed photograph, a knitted scarf, a plate of cookies. "Consumables are actually great," Wise says. "Their environmental impact is minimal, and they're not going into a landfill." Instead of regular gifts, Zahradnik's Norwegian father hands out what she calls "heritage packages": collections of homemade and store-bought Norwegian food such as hjortebakkels (doughnuts), yule kaka (bread) and gjetost cheese. "I know I can buy it at the supermarket, but it tastes better from my dad," Zahradnik says.

Give to charity instead.

Like asking for contributions, this gift alternative can be tricky to execute. The key is to make sure that the cause you are supporting is important to the receiver, not only to you. Just because you want to ensure that every Dalmatian has a safe, happy home doesn't mean that your best friend wants to celebrate Hanukkah with a donation to Dalmatian Rescue. Instead, think about what matters to her and where she already gives her time and money.

Some charitable organizations are especially good at making the donor feel involved in the cause, and some are particularly child-friendly. The World Wildlife Fund, for example, lets donors "adopt" an endangered animal; choose from a list of dozens, including the giant anteater, great white shark and golden lion tamarin. For a $25 donation, the adopter receives a certificate and a photograph of the animal; for $50, the organization includes a stuffed toy version of the creature, perfect for the hard-to-buy-for stingray lover on your list.

What celebrities are thankful for this year

Being rich and/or famous doesn't stop Hollywood from taking a moment to gorge on turkey and take stock of this year's blessings. The Associated Press asked dozens of celebrities what they're thankful for.

Here are just a few samples:

"I am grateful for so many things in 2008. I feel like there's a chance of real promise in this country."—singer Faith Hill.

■ ■ ■

"I think we want to be, most of all, thankful for the fans. This year, they've been always sticking around for us, always been there for us. The fans are the best. They've come to every concert. They've slept outside (of) venues. And we can't thank them enough."—Joe Jonas of the Jonas Brothers.

■ ■ ■

"Health. It's all about health. My health. My loved ones' health. We're all here. We're all OK. As I get older (starts to chuckle) we're all hanging on! What's going to happen next year? So far, we made it through another one."—musician Barry Manilow.

■ ■ ■

"I'm thankful that America actually stood up and did something quite extraordinary (with the election). ... I've been over here for 12 years and I have a green card and I've been delaying becoming a citizen because I was really troubled by the politics in this country, and sort of befuddled by it."—Australian actor Simon Baker, "The Mentalist."

■ ■ ■

"Mostly it's my family. I think I've realized that mostly this year, because there's been so many crazy ups and downs, and so many different things, and I've always had the same family to come home to that will treat me like the same Miley as I was in Nashville. So, cool."—musician Miley Cyrus.

■ ■ ■

"On a personal level, my family's health. And on a global level, I guess everyone still has hope, and I like that."—actor John Travolta.

■ ■ ■

"In 2008 my son was born, Zuma Nesta Rock. So, that is clearly the most massive thing for me. ... I lucked out because my wife is really good with him. So, right now (wife Gwen Stefani is) doing most of it. So, my life hasn't changed that much, drastically. But it's incredible to have another little spirit right there."—musician Gavin Rossdale.

■ ■ ■

"I'm just blessed to have two very lovely children in my life, and health. It's something people don't think about a lot. I'm very lucky to be healthy and have healthy kids."—actress Reese Witherspoon.

■ ■ ■

"I'm most thankful that our country reminded everybody that we are a part of the world, and we're capable of incredible greatness in this country."—actress Mary Steenburgen.

■ ■ ■

"I'm grateful for all the times I laughed this year. That sounds crazy, but as you get older, you really take a moment and go, 'I laughed there, I had a sweet moment there. I took my kid to (hamburger restaurant) In-N-Out.' You know, I've to say, that's it for me pretty much at this point in my life: Just take those moments."—actress Rene Russo.

AP

In this Nov. 23, 2008 file photo, singer and musician Joe Jonas poses on the press line at the 2008 American Music Awards in Los Angeles.

Publisher disputes reports of book-buying freeze

NEW YORK (AP)—Reports of a buying freeze at Harcourt Houghton Mifflin is news to the publisher of one its imprints.

"I don't work at the Harcourt offices so I called to find out if the story was true," Otto Penzler, whose Otto Penzler Books specializes in mystery books and releases 6-8 titles per year, said Wednesday.

Penzler was referring to media stories alleging that Harcourt Houghton Mifflin (HMH) temporarily stopped acquiring new books.

"I was told that it had been blown out of proportion and that there was simply some belt-tightening going on. I asked, `Does this mean I can keep buying books?' `Absolutely,' I was told.

Penzler says the information came from a high-level Harcourt Houghton executive, whom he declined to publicly name, saying he wanted to preserve the official's privacy.

The book world was stunned Monday by a posting on the Web site of Publishers Weekly that HMH had "temporarily stopped" buying books, the latest shock resulting from the economic crisis. HMH is the publisher of Philip Roth, Nobel laureate Guenter Grass and one of the literary world's most lucrative franchises, J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

Houghton Mifflin acquired Harcourt in 2007. Their owner, the private-equity concern Education Media and Publishing Group, has acknowledged that rival publishers have expressed interest in buying HMH, leading to broad speculation in the industry that the announced halt in buying was a prelude to the company's sale.

"To the best of my knowledge, the company is not being shopped," HMH spokesman Josef Rosenfeld said Wednesday. He would not comment on whether other publishers had approached HMH.

NM governor hosts star-studded dinner at mansion

AP

In this Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 file photo, New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson addresses the Democratic National Convention in Denver.

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP)—Gov. Bill Richardson hosted a star-studded dinner party last weekend to thank moviemakers and celebrities, including George Clooney, Kevin Spacey and Paul Sorvino, for shooting films in the state.

Clooney and Spacey have been in New Mexico filming the action-comedy "The Men Who Stare at Goats." Sorvino has been working on "Doc West," a feature-length film for Italian television that is shooting around Santa Fe.

Other guests included Grant Heslov, director of "The Men Who Stare at Goats," and Mary McCormack, star of the Universal Network Television series "In Plain Sight," which is filming around Albuquerque.

The stars joined members of New Mexico's arts and business communities—including actress Ali MacGraw, a local resident—for a main course of grilled beef filet and Guinness cake for dessert.

Richardson, a second-term Democrat who is expected to be named Commerce Secretary by President-elect Barack Obama, has pushed filmmaking as an economic development tool in New Mexico.

Lured by hefty financial incentives and the availability of production facilities and technical crews, more than 110 feature films and television series have been shot in the state, earning it the nickname "Tamalewood."

This year's Oscar-winning "No Country for Old Men"—based on the novel by Santa Fe resident Cormac McCarthy—was shot almost entirely in New Mexico. Three other films made here—"3:10 to Yuma," "In the Valley of Elah" and "Transformers"—also nabbed Oscar nominations.

Richardson likes to welcome moviemakers at the mansion as a way of thanking them for their contribution, said Eric Witt, the governor's entertainment adviser.

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Sunday	1:25	4:30	7:15	
Mon thru Thurs		4:30	7:15	

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Synopsis
Frank Martin has been pressured into transporting Valentina, the kidnapped daughter of Leonid Vasilev, the head of the Environmental Protection Agency for the Ukraine, from Marseilles through Stuttgart and Budapest until he ends up in Odessa on the Black Sea. Along the way, with the help of Inspector Tarconi, Frank has to contend with the people who strong armed him to take the job, agents sent by Vasilev to intercept him, and the general non-cooperation of his passenger.

Four Christmases

Friday	1:15	4:05	7:10	9:45
Saturday	1:15	4:05	7:10	9:45
Sunday	1:15	4:05	7:10	
Mon thru Thurs		4:05	7:10	

Nince Vaughn, Reese Witherspoon
Comedy, Family, Holiday • Rated PG 13

Synopsis
No one enjoys the holidays more than Brad and Kate. Every December 25th, this happily unmarried, upscale San Francisco couple embark on a holiday tradition they have shared every year since they met—ditching their crazy families for a relaxing, fun-filled vacation in some sunny exotic locale. There, sipping margaritas by the pool, they toast the season, knowing they have once again avoided the chaos and emotional fallout of their four respective households: divorced parents, squabbling siblings, out-of-control kids and all the simmering resentments and awkward moments that are the hallmarks of every family Christmas.

★ ★ ★

Australia

Friday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Mon thru Thurs		4:00	7:00	

Nicole Kidman, Hugh Jackman
War, Romance • Rated PG 13

Synopsis
In Australia, on the brink of World War II, an English aristocrat travels to the faraway continent, where she meets a rough-hewn local and reluctantly agrees to join forces with him to save the land she inherited. Together, they embark upon a transforming journey across hundreds of miles of the world's most beautiful yet unforgiving terrain, only to still face the bombing of the city of Darwin by the Japanese forces that attacked Pearl Harbor.

Twilight

Friday	1:30	4:25	7:20	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:25	7:20	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:25	7:20	
Mon thru Thurs		4:25	7:20	

Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson
Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Bolt

Friday	1:10	4:15	7:30	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:15	7:30	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:15	7:30	
Mon thru Thurs		4:15	7:30	

John Travolta, Miley Cyrus
Action, Animated • Rated PG

Quantum of Solace

Friday	1:05	4:20	7:05	9:35
Saturday	1:05	4:20	7:05	9:35
Sunday	1:05	4:20	7:05	
Mon thru Thurs		4:20	7:05	

Daniel Craig, Judi Dench
Action, Adventure • Rated PG 13

Madagascar Escape 2 Africa

Friday	1:20	4:10	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:20	4:10	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:20	4:10	7:25	
Mon thru Thurs		4:10	7:25	

Ben Stiller, Chris Rock
Comedy, Animated • Rated PG

● NO PASSES ■ NO PASSES OR SUPER SAVERS

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www.gohollywood.com

Co-workers try to burst bubble of woman's happy marriage

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: I have been married for 15 years to the sweetest man in the world. We love each other, we like each other, and I feel truly fortunate.

I was recently involved in a conversation with some co-workers who were discussing marriage, and they asked me what I would do if my husband left me. I told them I trust my husband completely, and I know he would never leave me.

I was then informed that I am living in a fairy tale! The rest of the conversation was spent trying to convince me that my husband will eventually leave me, even though none of these people has ever met him. He has never cheated on me. I tried to explain that there are still some decent men in the world, but they refused to accept it.

Abby, I prefer not to live my life looking for negative things because I believe it taints relationships. I believe that if I continue to view my marriage as blessed and wonderful, it will be. Why can't people allow others to be happy? What prevents these people from seeing good instead of bad and, more important, why can't they see that there are couples in good marriages who are committed to making them work?

HAPPILY MARRIED IN CORPUS CHRISTI

DEAR HAPPILY MARRIED: Have you never heard the expression "misery loves company"? Some people are so dysfunctional that the only way they can make themselves feel better is to make others feel worse. When they see a happily married couple, it reminds them that in some way they failed or chose someone who failed them.

You have a healthy, optimistic attitude and a successful marriage. Please do not allow your co-workers to continue to spread their negativity, or sooner or later it may affect you. Avoid them, live your life, continue to appreciate what you have, and let them wallow in their suspicion and discontent.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I host Christmas at our home. We have always served the meals buffet-style. Please tell me how to address the problem of relatives who move down the serving line constantly licking their fingers and then touching the utensils of all the other dishes. This may not be a concern to everyone, but to us it is unsanitary and unappetizing.

While we're on the subject, whatever happened to people washing their hands before they eat? Please hurry with your answer. The holidays are almost here, and I need a solution.

PICKY IN WASHINGTON

DEAR PICKY: While it's advisable for people to wash their hands before eating, not everyone does—and unless you want to assume the role of "Mommy" and pass out antibacterial hand wipes as people get in line, you may have to accept that some of your guests won't do it.

As to how to handle the "contaminated" utensils, consider serving the food cafeteria-style, with you and your spouse doling it out to each of your guests. This should eliminate the "ick" factor.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I know this issue has been addressed before in your column, but now it has happened to me. My adult son died a year ago. It was very sudden. I try not to constantly talk about him, but when I meet people for the first time and I am asked if I have children, how should I respond? I have one other child, an adult daughter.

WONDERING IN OHIO

DEAR WONDERING: Please accept my sympathy for the loss of your son. When someone asks if you have children, it is perfectly acceptable to tell the questioner that you have two—a daughter and a son in heaven.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Bruce Willis settles dispute with Malaysia company

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Malaysian technology conglomerate has repaid $900,000 to Bruce Willis after the actor filed a lawsuit demanding a refund of his investment.

Martin Singer, Willis' lawyer, said Wednesday the federal lawsuit filed in Los Angeles has been "amicably resolved."

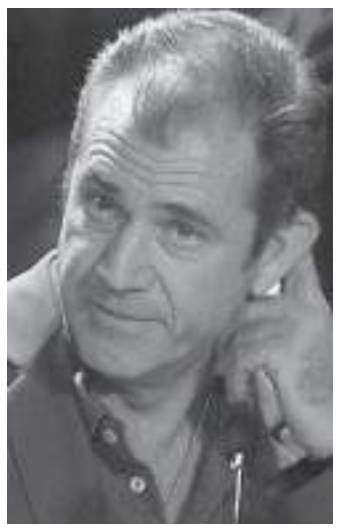
The Kuala Lumpur-based Petra Group said Willis invested $2 million last year in its subsidiary, Green Rubber, a developer of technology that can recycle rubber in old tires.

Petra returned $1.1 million to the star of the "Die Hard" action films earlier this year when he decided to pull out his investment. Willis sued last week to get the remaining $900,000.

Willis says he still has a shareholding position in the company and believes the Green Rubber technology has "vast potential" for the environment.

A Jan. 19, 2008 file photo shows actor Bruce Willis at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.
AP

Judge orders Mel Gibson deposed in lawsuit



LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge says Mel Gibson will have to answer questions about planning and filming "The Passion of the Christ" in response to a screenwriter's lawsuit.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Gregory Alarcon on Tuesday ordered Gibson to appear for a deposition by mid-January. Gibson's attorneys had tried to keep him from having to answer questions regarding his blockbuster film about Jesus' last hours.

Screenwriter Benedict Fitzgerald is suing Gibson, claiming he was underpaid for his work on "Passion."

Fitzgerald's attorneys claimed Tuesday that his payments were eroded by Gibson's spending habits while filming the movie in Italy, including "tens of thousands" of dollars on his children's education and a $78,000 chiropractor bill.

In this Nov. 7, 2004 file photo, Mel Gibson talks about his film "The Passion of the Christ" after accepting the Motion Picture Award during the Catholics in Media Awards ceremony in Beverly Hills, Calif.
AP

Carson Daly to become daddy

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Talk show host Carson Daly will have a full-time guest beginning next year.

Daly publicist Heather Lylis says the 35-year-old TV personality and girlfriend Siri Pinter are expecting a child.

It will be the first child for both the "Last Call with Carson Daly" host and Pinter, an NBC associate producer who has worked at Daly's show and "Last Comic Standing."

Lylis didn't provide additional details Tuesday of the pregnancy, which was first reported by People magazine.

In this Nov. 16, 2008 file photo, former MTV VJ Carson Daly makes an appearance on MTV's TRL "Total Finale Live" show at the MTV studios in Times Square in New York.
AP

For sale: A helmet, a hat, a lightsaber and more

ANGELES (AP)—Luke Skywalker's lightsaber from "Star Wars," Indiana Jones' hat and whip from "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom" and Batman's cowl from "Batman Begins" are going on the auction block.

The iconic movie items are for sale as part of Profiles in History's Hollywood auction, to be held Dec. 11 at the company's headquarters in Calabasas, Calif.

The lightsaber is expected to sell for at least $150,000. Other items featured in the auction include C3PO's helmet, a complete set of "Harry Potter" books signed by J.K. Rowling, a three-volume collection of "The Lord of the Rings" signed by J.R.R. Tolkien and Arnold Schwarzenegger's costume from "Terminator 2: Judgment Day."

'Dexter' author Lindsay makes cameo appearance

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Dexter" author Jeff Lindsay says the cameo he filmed for the Showtime series based on his work is intended to make a point: He loves the show. Why does he think there's skepticism? "It's Hollywood. Everybody knows Hollywood gets hold of wonderful ideas" and ruins them, Lindsay said. But the producers of Showtime's "Dexter," which stars Michael C. Hall, "really know what they're doing," Lindsay said. Lindsay plays the role of a vice detective guarding a hospital room, and makes his appearance Sunday just shy of halfway through the episode. The character of Dexter Morgan, a blood-spatter expert and killer who takes justice into his own hands, was introduced in Lindsay's book "Darkly Dreaming Dexter."

Ohio man guilty of killing friend of rapper T.I.

CINCINNATI (AP)—A Cincinnati man has been found guilty of murder in the 2006 shooting the friend of Grammy Award-winning rapper T.I. Hosea Thomas was found guilty Wednesday of murdering T.I.'s entourage member, 26-year-old Philant Johnson. The 34-year-old Thomas was also convicted of felonious assault and illegally having a gun after a felony conviction. T.I., whose real name is Clifford Harris, testified last week in Thomas' trial. The rapper told jurors that he believes the bullets fired at his entourage during the gun battle two years ago in Cincinnati were meant for him. He wasn't injured. The rapper was in Cincinnati on May 3, 2006, to perform. Thomas faces up to life in prison at his Dec. 23 sentencing.

Nelly's party will include new scholarships

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Rapper Nelly and music producer Jermaine Dupri will host the third annual Black and White Ball in St. Louis, a gala that draws celebrities and will include the creation of a new scholarship program. The party on Sunday night is expected to include singer Ashanti among the guests and a performance by the rhythm-and-blues group Boyz II Men. A new program will be announced at the formal-attire event to provide two students from the St. Louis region with full-tuition scholarships to Lindenwood University in nearby St. Charles, Mo.

Pastimes

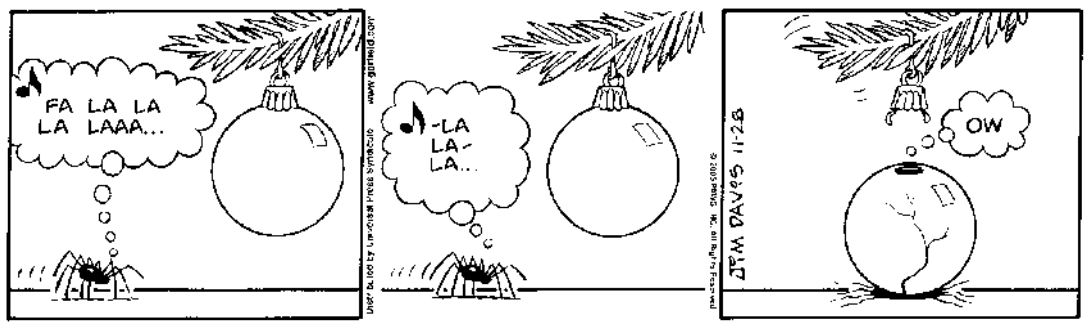
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

WATCH OUT, MOM. I'M IN A BAD MOOD.
BE IN A BAD MOOD SOMEWHERE ELSE, OK? I'M BUSY.
HMPH! I'LL BET MY BIOLOGICAL MOTHER WOULD'VE BOUGHT ME A COMIC BOOK AND MADE ME FEEL BETTER INSTEAD OF SHUNNING ME LIKE YOU.
KID, ANYONE BUT YOUR BIOLOGICAL MOTHER WOULD'VE LEFT YOU TO THE WOLVES LONG AGO.
YEAH RIGHT. REALLY. HOW MUCH DID YOU PAY FOR ME?

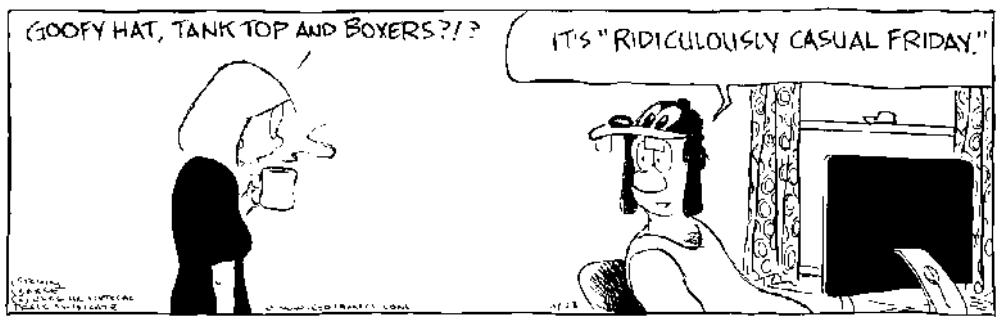
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



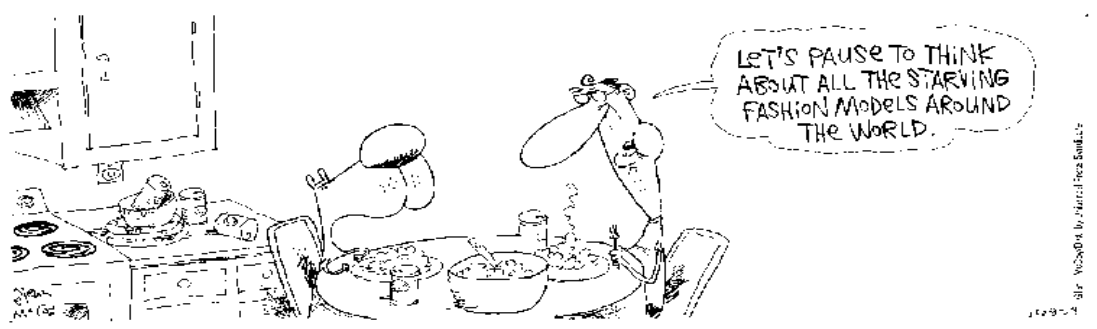
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

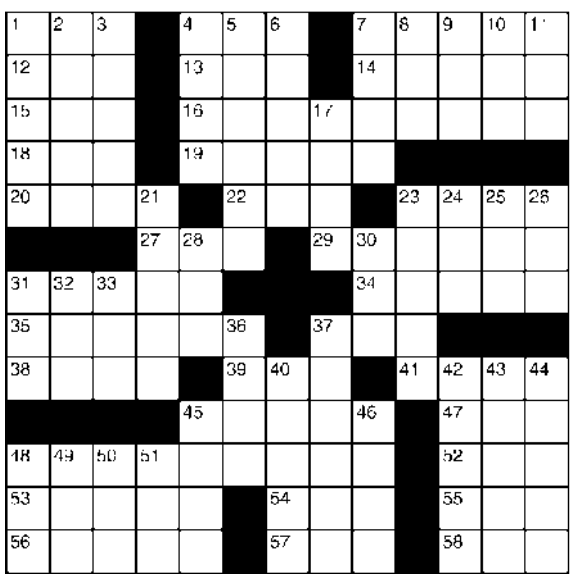
ACROSS
1 Bug killer
4 "— Wiedersehen"
7 Son o' Japheth
12 Second person
13 Chromosome component
14 Home
15 Under the weather
16 Titmouse's cousin
18 Ph. bk. info
19 Bizarre
20 CSA uniforms
22 Pi follower
23 Entreaty
27 Feedbag tidbit
29 Swindle
31 Really bad
34 Blue hue
35 Printed calico
37 Wood-shaping tool
38 Chinese gang
39 Have
41 Host
45 Wine option
47 Perfume label word
48 Taco Bell mascot
52 Sleeve contents
53 Made on a loom
54 Rowboat need
55 Poorly lit
56 Rendezvous
57 On in years
58 For example

DOWN
1 Very eager (to)
2 Sorrow
3 Oklahoma city
4 Not pizzicato
5 Not needing medical attention
6 Hill of music
7 Put together
8 Lawyers' org.
9 Pantheon member
10 "— to Joy"
11 "Golly!"
17 Gator's kin
21 Mormon leader
23 Popular takeout entree
24 Baton Rouge sch.
25 Always, in verse
26 Pub order
28 Model Carol
30 Conned
31 Performance
32 One of the five W's
33 Dorsal appendage
36 "J'accuse" writer
37 Yearly
40 Rodeo rider's cry
42 Peruses
43 "West Side Story" song
44 "Delish!"
45 Batter's tactic
46 Jack, e.g.
48 100 lbs.
49 Perp. to vert.
50 Trellis climber
51 "— So Fine"

Solution time: 25 mins.

D	A	B	■	G	A	F	L	■	T	O	F	J
E	_	I	■	U	N	D	C	■	I	B	I	S
B	I	L	I	I	N	G	S	■	A	O	N	F
■	■	L	A	D	■	Y	E	A	R	E	N	D
G	_	C	W	E	R	■	H	N	A	■	■	■
R	O	W	■	D	F	W	■	D	E	B	T	S
A	B	E	L	■	D	O	G	■	D	I	R	E
M	E	D	I	A	■	K	E	Y	■	L	I	C
■	■	■	O	F	T	■	M	E	R	L	O	T
Q	U	A	N	T	U	M	■	L	E	I	■	■
L	A	G	E	■	B	I	L	I	E	O	I	D
I	D	E	S	■	A	■	C	E	■	N	E	O
P	U	S	S	■	S	O	J	A	■	S	E	C

Yesterday's answer 11-28



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute. touch-tone/rotary phones. (18 or y.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Scarlett Pomers, 20; Jon Stewart, 46; Judd Nelson, 49; Ed Harris, 58

Happy Birthday: Timing is everything and you must get to the finish line before the time is up. Changes in your personal life may cause you to slow down or hold off doing what needs to be done. Don't let emotional matters get to you. Carefully balance work and pleasure. Your numbers are 6, 18, 20, 23, 31, 36, 40

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Get your paperwork in order. Take care of legal matters or tie up loose ends that may cost you in the new year if you are late in filing or returning something owed. Good fortune is within reach. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Partnerships are looking very good, both personally and professionally. Don't be afraid to make a change that will allow you to be around the people who can benefit you the most. Spend your time working toward a goal. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Make plans to have fun with friends or with the person you love the most. Emotions will be running high and true feelings and plans for the future can be revealed. Be honest and speak from the heart. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): If you can't change something, you may have to walk away from the situation. Stressing over what's already happened won't help. Do what you can to reestablish your position and status. Don't let your emotions spill over into your job. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Treat yourself to whatever makes you happy. Socializing with people who can contribute to your success will go well and could even lead to a proposal for advancement in the new year. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Tidy up any little messes that you left undone. You don't want to get caught doing something that you criticize others for doing. Love is in the stars and you should be planning something special for two. If you are single, attend something that interests you and you won't be alone for long. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You can get what you want if you don't hold back. Say what's on your mind and what you would like to see happen. You may be surprised by the way you feel after you share your thoughts. You are close to achieving your goals, so don't stop midway. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Show how much you care by doing something nice for someone you think to be special. You will make an impression that will result in something you didn't ask for or expect. Good things can develop quickly if you know what you want. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You'll have plenty to do and not much help. Before you make too many promises, complete what's on your to-do list. Back away from anyone who wants you to compromise your position or integrity. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You may be feeling sorry for someone but don't let guilt be the reason you give in. Be honest about your likes and dislikes. Make a good judgment call concerning donations, gifts and who you want to have as a friend. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Search the job market or check out re-training opportunities. Someone from your past may try to damage your reputation. Don't get angry but don't let this person get away with slander either. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Avoid fast talkers, fast drivers and emotional conversations if you want to ease your stress. Problems with someone in a position of authority will leave you worried. You can rely on someone who has always been there for you in the past. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are spirited, outgoing, strong and independent. You like to experience a thrill and will always chase a dream.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	3		7				5	
			5		3			
6		2				7		1
	7						1	5
8	1			9			4	
1		9				2		3
			3		4			
	6				1		8	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/28

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	1	3	4	5	9	7	2	6
6	2	9	7	8	1	3	5	4
4	7	5	3	2	6	1	9	8
3	5	8	1	6	7	9	4	2
7	4	1	2	9	8	6	3	5
9	6	2	5	4	3	8	7	1
2	8	6	9	3	4	5	1	7
1	9	4	6	7	5	2	8	3
5	3	7	8	1	2	4	6	9

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them, and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

MOISTURE PROOF Solution: 10 letters

E	G	N	I	H	T	O	L	C	L	I	M	A	T	E
F	I	T	F	F	H	S	S	A	I	G	P	R	P	D
T	A	E	H	L	D	O	O	W	D	E	U	L	G	N
N	Z	R	C	T	B	L	L	E	H	S	U	R	D	U
A	E	E	N	T	D	A	X	D	T	G	L	R	N	O
R	F	V	U	O	R	I	G	N	I	S	A	C	I	R
A	I	O	L	B	F	O	U	S	O	U	Y	O	O	R
U	R	C	O	I	I	T	N	L	G	P	E	M	J	U
G	M	N	N	D	L	R	U	I	F	L	R	S	E	S
C	F	I	T	S	E	T	L	Q	C	A	T	R	S	E
E	S	A	V	B	I	T	A	U	E	S	U	O	H	R
H	P	R	B	O	N	D	T	I	I	T	E	P	U	V
E	A	U	N	I	P	L	E	D	G	E	O	A	T	I
T	R	J	A	R	S	N	M	P	A	R	W	V	L	C
I	M	P	E	R	M	E	A	B	L	E	F	A	S	E

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Armor, Bags, Bond, Bottle, Casing, Climate, Clothing, Cover, Electronics, File, Finish, Firm, Fits, Fixed, Fluid, Food, Glass, Glaze, Glue, Guarantee, Guard, Hold, House, Impermeable, Jars, Joint, Layer, Liquid, Lunch, Metal, Paint, Plaster, Pledge, Plug, Rain, Rubber, Rust, Safe, Seal, Service, Sheet, Shoe, Shut, Solution, Surround, Tape, Tar, Vapors, Vase, Wood, Wrap

Yesterday's Answer: Highlights

SALE: Lots of Christmas items, especially toys, on sale this week. Also, all other items are on sale, too. Prices are slashed to the bone. Stock up now. Sale ends Christmas Eve. Don't miss out. Shop online at puzzles.com.

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

LSG Sky Chefs

VACANCIES

■ **Delivery Drivers**

Local / IR only
Pickup application at LSG main office on Airport Road.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO WITHDRAW AND NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO WITHDRAW

Following a strategic review of our business in the region, notice is being given that MSIG Insurance (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. (formerly known as Aviva General Insurance Pte. Ltd.) intends to withdraw from the insurance business in the CNMI. An application for an Order permitting withdrawal from the insurance business in the CNMI has been filed with the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, Department of Commerce, CNMI.

All person interested in this matter should contact Rodney J. Rankin, Aon Insurance Micronesia (Saipan), Inc. as General Agent for MSIG Insurance (Singapore) Pte. Ltd., P.O. Box 502177, Garapan, Saipan, MP 96950 or (670) 234-2811.

MSIG Insurance (Singapore) Pte. Ltd.

DRUNK DRIVING
Over the limit. Under arrest.

Shell
North Pacific Islands

Mariana Acquisition Corporation, dba Shell Marianas
is seeking a qualified dependable and dynamic Local Hire to join our team as a

Marketing Assistant

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The ideal candidate will have practical work experience in a Marketing capacity; demonstrable customer service skill set; excellent organizational skills; excellent verbal and written communication skills; the ability to multi-task and respond accordingly in a fast-paced work environment; enthusiasm to provide outstanding Customer Service experiences. Candidate must be a team player and results-oriented with intermediate proficiency in in Microsoft Office applications. A college degree is not required, but highly advantageous.

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Saipan Tribune

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Attorney for Petitioner

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL GUARDIAN FOR BRANDON JAY LISUA BORJA, a male child, By: GLORIA LANIYO LISUA, Petitioner.	CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0639-FCD NOTICE OF HEARING

TO: ALL LIVING PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, AND ADULT SIBLINGS OF THE MINOR CHILD, BRANDON JAY LISUA BORJA.

You are hereby notified that the hearing on the petition filed by Petitioner, Gloria Laniyo Lisua, to be appointed General Guardian of the minor male child, Brandon Jay Lisua Borja, has been set for 1:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, on Wednesday, December 17, 2008, in Courtroom 205A at the Commonwealth Superior Court, Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan. You are invited to attend this hearing.

Dated this 5th day of November 2008.

/s/ Clerk of Court
Superior Court

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

GUAM INSURANCE ADJUSTERS, INC.,	:	CIVIL ACTION NO. 06-0576
Plaintiff,	:	
-v-	:	
CATHERINE BORJA PANGELINAN	:	
Deceased.	:	

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Law Office of Michael A. White, LLC, the Plaintiffs's Attorneys, whose address is P.O. Box 5222, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file an answer with this Summons, judgment buy default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

By order of the above court:

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

Dated this 18th day of November, 2008:

AYUDA NETWORK, INC.
An Alliance of Northern Marianas Human/Social Service Providers

"DOING THINGS BETTER TOGETHER"

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Ayuda Network, Inc., a non-profit organization, is looking for an energetic and dynamic individual to fill a full-time position of:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Through the direct supervision of the President, Board of Directors, the Executive Director will be responsible for the day to day administration of the Ayuda Network, Inc., and assisting public/private agencies in the coordination of social/human services. The incumbent is responsible to secure and manage grants and other funding sources.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS:

Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in a field related to Social Services with a minimum of two years experience in leadership positions working in social services or equivalent. Possess knowledge of computers and experience in database management and network administration. Experience in community organization preferred.

Applications and position description may be picked up and turned in at the Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA), Anatahan Drive, Government Housing #1315 from 8:00 a.m. 11:30 and 12:30 till 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. All applications shall accompanied by a cover letter, a resume, and a police clearance. Dateline for submission of applications will be no later than 3:00 p.m., Friday, December 5, 2008. For more information contact the Ayuda Network, Inc. at 322-7469 or CJPA at 664-4550.

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

The Marianas Visitors Authority is seeking for qualified individuals for the following positions:

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JVA#08-001	Chief Accountant	December 2, 2008 or until filled
JVA#08-006	Personnel Manager	December 2, 2008

HOW TO APPLY
Interested persons may contact the Marianas Visitors Authority office at (670) 664-3200/01 or by emailing personnel@mymarianas.com for employment application forms. All applicants must submit an MVA employment application plus other required documents in order to be considered for any of the positions listed above. All applications should be submitted to the MVA office no later than the closing date of the announcement.

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Rondo, Celtics rally to beat Warriors

BOSTON (AP)—Ray Allen scored 25 points and Rajon Rondo had a season-high 22 as the Boston Celtics overcame a 14-point, third-quarter deficit in Wednesday's 119-111 victory over the Golden State Warriors.

Paul Pierce had 21 points, six rebounds and five assists. Kevin Garnett added 21 points and 13 rebounds for Boston, which won its sixth consecutive game.

Point guard Rondo added eight rebounds and seven assists, running the Celtics' offense to a season-high point effort.

Corey Maggette paced the Warriors with a season-high 32 points and Stephen Jackson had 30. Golden State lost its fourth straight.

Cavaliers 117, Thunder 82

At Cleveland, LeBron James played just 17 minutes, tying his career low, and scored 14 points as Cleveland rolled over Oklahoma City.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas led Cleveland with 17 points. All 12 players on the roster scored. The Cavaliers are 12-3 for the first time in franchise history and remained undefeated at home in eight games.

Oklahoma City (1-15) has the worst record in the NBA and lost its 13th straight game. The Thunder are 0-3 under interim coach Scott Brooks, who took over when P.J. Carlesimo was fired Nov. 22.

Raptors 93, Bobcats 86

At Toronto, Chris Bosh had 39 points and 11 rebounds and Joey Graham added a season-high 17 points in a seven-point win over Charlotte.

Andrea Bargnani had 11 points, while Jose Calderon had 10 points and nine assists as Toronto won for the first time in three games and improved to 3-4 at home.

Gerald Wallace led Charlotte with 23 points. Emeka Okafor had 16 points and 14 rebounds, but the Bobcats still lost for the fifth time in six games.

Magic 96, 76ers 94

At Philadelphia, Rashard Lewis scored 19 points and hit the go-ahead 3-pointer with 4.7 seconds left to lead Orlando over the hosts.

Dwight Howard had 21 points and 14 rebounds for the Magic (11-4), who shot just 12-for-35 in the second half and nearly surrendered a 12-point, first-half lead. Tony Battie had a season-high 20 points and Turkoglu added 12 for Orlando, which won for the seventh time in eight games.

Elton Brand scored 17 of his 21 points in the second half for Philadelphia (7-8).

Suns 110, Timberwolves 102

At Minneapolis, Shaquille O'Neal had 18 points, 10 rebounds and three blocks to help Phoenix snap its three-game losing streak in Minnesota.

Steve Nash added 20 points and six assists in 27 minutes for the Suns, who were playing the second game of a back-to-back but still had enough in the tank to down the woeful Wolves.

Al Jefferson continued to dominate Phoenix with 28 points and 17 rebounds, including a franchise-record 12 on the offensive end. He averaged 30.5 points and 15.3 rebounds in four games against Phoenix last season.

Pistons 110, Knicks 96

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Richard Hamilton led a balanced attack with 17 points and Detroit beat undermanned New York.

The Pistons had eight players score between 10 and 17 points, and Michael Curry didn't have to play any of his starters more than 31 minutes. Amir Johnson had 13 rebounds off the bench, while fellow reserve Rodney Stuckey had 11 assists.

Al Harrington led the Knicks with 25 points.

AP

Boston Celtics' Kendrick Perkins (43) and Kevin Garnett (5) give a pat on the head to Rajon Rondo (9) after Rondo was fouled in the third quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Golden State Warriors, Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2008, in Boston.

Hawks 102, Bucks 96

At Atlanta, Al Horford scored 21 points and converted a key three-point play to protect a late lead, leading Atlanta over Milwaukee.

The Hawks have won three of four after losing four straight. Atlanta was ahead most of the game but neither team led by double figures.

Richard Jefferson scored 25 points for Milwaukee and rookie Ramon Sessions had 21. But reserve Charlie Villanueva, who had 19 points in 22 minutes, was the Bucks' only other scorer in double figures.

Spurs 98, Bulls 88

At San Antonio, Tim Duncan scored 21 points while rookie George Hill added 19 points and 11 rebounds as San Antonio beat Chicago for its sixth win in seven games.

The Bulls (7-9) have lost four of six since starting a seven-game road trip on Nov. 18. The trip ends Sunday in Philadelphia.

Pacers 91, Rockets 90

At Houston, Danny Granger tipped in his own miss with 13 seconds left and Indiana rallied from 10 points down in the fourth quarter to beat Houston.

Troy Murphy scored 14 of his 21 points in the final quarter as the Pacers snapped a three-game losing streak in Houston. Indiana was outrebounded 57-44, but held the Rockets to 35 percent shooting (31-of-89).

Luis Scola scored 15 points and matched a career high with 18 rebounds for Houston, which played without injured Tracy McGrady. Yao Ming had 19 points and 10 rebounds for the Rockets.

Jazz 117, Grizzlies 100

At Salt Lake City, Deron Williams had 11 points and 15 assists in his return to the lineup, leading Utah over Memphis.

Paul Millsap, who started in place of the injured Carlos Boozer, led Utah with a season-high 24 points and 16 rebounds. Mehmet Okur and Ronnie Brewer each added 21 points as the Jazz got back on the winning track in their second game of a four-game homestand.

Rudy Gay broke out of a shooting slump to score 27 points and O.J. Mayo had 22 on 10-of-15 shooting, but the Grizzlies lost their fourth straight and their eighth in nine games.

Trail Blazers 106, Heat 68

At Portland, Channing Frye scored 17 points, LaMarcus Aldridge added 16, and Portland built a big first-quarter lead and routed Miami.

The Blazers scored a season-high 37 points in the first quarter and led by as many as 40 points. Greg Oden had 10 points and 10 rebounds, while Travis Outlaw was among six Blazers to score in double figures with 15 points.

Sergio Rodriguez didn't score, but had 11 assists as Portland (10-6) won for the ninth time in 12 games.

Nuggets 106, Clippers 105

At Los Angeles, Carmelo Anthony scored 30 points, grabbed 11 rebounds and hit a go-ahead jumper with 1:15 remaining to help Denver beat Los Angeles after blowing a 13-point lead.

Zach Randolph and Mardy Collins debuted for the Clippers following last Friday's trade that sent Cuttino Mobley and Tim Thomas to the New York Knicks.

Randolph missed seven of his first eight shots and finished 3-for-11 with seven points in 25 minutes. Collins picked up two fouls in his first 2 1.2 minutes on the floor and played nine scoreless minutes.

Nets 116, Kings 114, OT

At Sacramento, California, Vince Carter scored 25 points, Devin Harris made the go-ahead basket and added 18 points, and New Jersey Nets beat Sacramento.

Trailing by one point following a timeout, Harris inbounded the ball and got it right back. He drove to the basket against Bobby Jackson, then pulled up for a jumper to the right of the foul line, giving New Jersey a 115-114 lead with 12 seconds left.

Jackson's long 3-pointer was an airball in the closing seconds and the Nets secured the rebound. Jarvis Hayes made a free throw with 2.4 seconds left and Brad Miller's heave from halfcourt fell short to give the Nets the victory, their first at Arco Arena since Nov. 30, 1997.

K-Rod's agent: No talks until winter meetings

NEW YORK (AP)—Francisco Rodriguez's agent won't start detailed discussions with teams until the winter meetings open in Las Vegas on Dec. 8.

Paul Kinzer, who represents the free-agent closer, doesn't expect the marketplace to get busy for another 10 days.

"I'll probably see the Mets at the winter meetings. I don't have anything else planned," he said Wednesday.

After saving a major league-record 62 games for the Los Angeles Angels, K-Rod is seeking a five-year contract averaging about $15 million per season. The Mets, needing a closer following Billy Wagner's elbow operation, are viewed as a key suitor.

Kinzer wouldn't identify any of the other teams he spoke with. He doesn't expect Rodriguez to reach an agreement in the next week or two.

"I think it will be after the winter meetings. I don't know how long after," he said. "It doesn't take long after you get this started and everybody starts talking."

Only two of the 171 free agents have reached agreements. All-Star pitcher Ryan Dempster stayed with the Chicago Cubs for a $52 million, four-year contract, and lefty reliever Jeremy Affeldt left Cincinnati for an $8 million, two-year deal with the San Francisco Giants.

Kinzer spent Tuesday in Oakland, Calif., with another free-agent client, Rafael Furcal. The shortstop was shown around by the Athletics.

"They wanted him to see where the players and where the coaches live, the manager," Kinzer said. "He had no idea it was that beautiful just over the mountain there. Everybody treated him great. He enjoyed the visit."

Furcal, who spent the last three seasons with the Los Angeles Dodgers, also is of interest to the San Francisco Giants. He, too, will take some time to make a decision on his next club.

"We aren't there yet," Kinzer said.

Scott Boras' clients usually sign later in the offseason, and his deals could help set market prices. Among the free agents he represents are outfielders Manny Ramirez and Garret Anderson; first baseman Mark Teixeira; catchers Jason Varitek and Ivan Rodriguez; third baseman Joe Crede; and pitchers Derek Lowe and Oliver Perez.

MLB BRIEFS

Judge lifts restrictions on BALCO testimony

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Thousands of pages of grand jury testimony related to the long-running steroids investigation of Barry Bonds and other athletes were unsealed Wednesday by a federal judge. U.S. District Court Judge Susan Illston signed an order that allows prosecutors to share grand jury transcripts, medical lab reports and search warrant affidavits with Bonds' lawyers. It came in response to a request from the U.S. Attorney's office last week that the protective order on the documents be lifted to avoid possibly delaying Bonds' trial, scheduled to begin March 2. Prosecutors also wanted to avoid "ambiguity" regarding their ability to disclose the documents to Bonds' attorneys. Prosecutors noted that much of the testimony had already been leaked to news media. Lawyers for the former San Francisco Giants' outfielder could not be reached for comment. Bonds, baseball's career home run leader, faces charges of making false statements and obstruction of justice for allegedly lying to a grand jury about whether he took performance-enhancing drugs. He has pleaded not guilty to the charges. In August, Bonds' legal team asked for grand jury testimony of all witnesses involved in the probe, including current baseball players Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield, former football player Bill Romanowski and disgraced Olympian Marion Jones. The documents, however, will not be made public, according to Jack Gillund, a spokesman for U.S. Attorney Joseph Russoniello. He said testimony from the secret grand jury proceedings will remain closely guarded.

Report: Charity parts ways with troubled Clemens

Roger Clemens has been asked to end his involvement with a charity golf tournament he has hosted for four years as the fallout from the Mitchell Report continues to haunt the seven-time Cy Young award winner. Although Clemens helped raise millions of dollars for charities associated with the event, the Giff Nielsen Day of Golf for Kids was held Nov. 11 at Houston's Shadow Hawk Golf Club without him, the Daily News reported in Wednesday's edition. "Roger Clemens is no longer affiliated with the tournament," said Nielsen, a Houston broadcaster. "We decided we would go our separate ways until his off-field stuff is settled. "I approached him, and as we talked, we reached a mutual agreement that we would put our relationship on hold. He was good about it. He said `I agree with the decision.'" Clemens has denied using performance-enhancing drugs since he was identified in George Mitchell's report on drug use in baseball. He filed a defamation lawsuit in January against his former trainer, Brian McNamee, who claims he injected Clemens with steroids and human growth hormone. Federal prosecutors also are looking into whether Clemens committed perjury when he testified under oath in front of a congressional committee that he never used performance-enhancing drugs. ***(AP)***

Browns' Quinn weighing surgery on broken finger

BEREA, Ohio (AP)—Brady Quinn's opportunity came and went in a hurry. He waited his whole life to make the NFL and then 1 1/2 years more for his first start for the Cleveland Browns. And then, it was gone—a three-and-out more painful than any before.

Quinn's season ended on Wednesday after just three starts, done in by a broken right index finger that he tried to play with last week and may now require surgery.

Given the options of resting or an operation last week, Quinn could have sat out Sunday's game against Houston. But the second-year QB chose to play and did more damage to his finger.

"I knew (further damage) that was a consequence if I went in and played," Quinn said Wednesday. "That was something that I was willing to risk. If I had a chance to do it over, I would do it again."

Quinn, who threw an interception on his last pass of the season, must now decide whether to have surgery or have his finger immobilized in a splint. Browns coach Romeo Crennel said doctors want Quinn to make up his mind within a week. Either way, it's at least a six-week process and Quinn won't play again this season. The Browns placed him on injured reserve Thursday night.

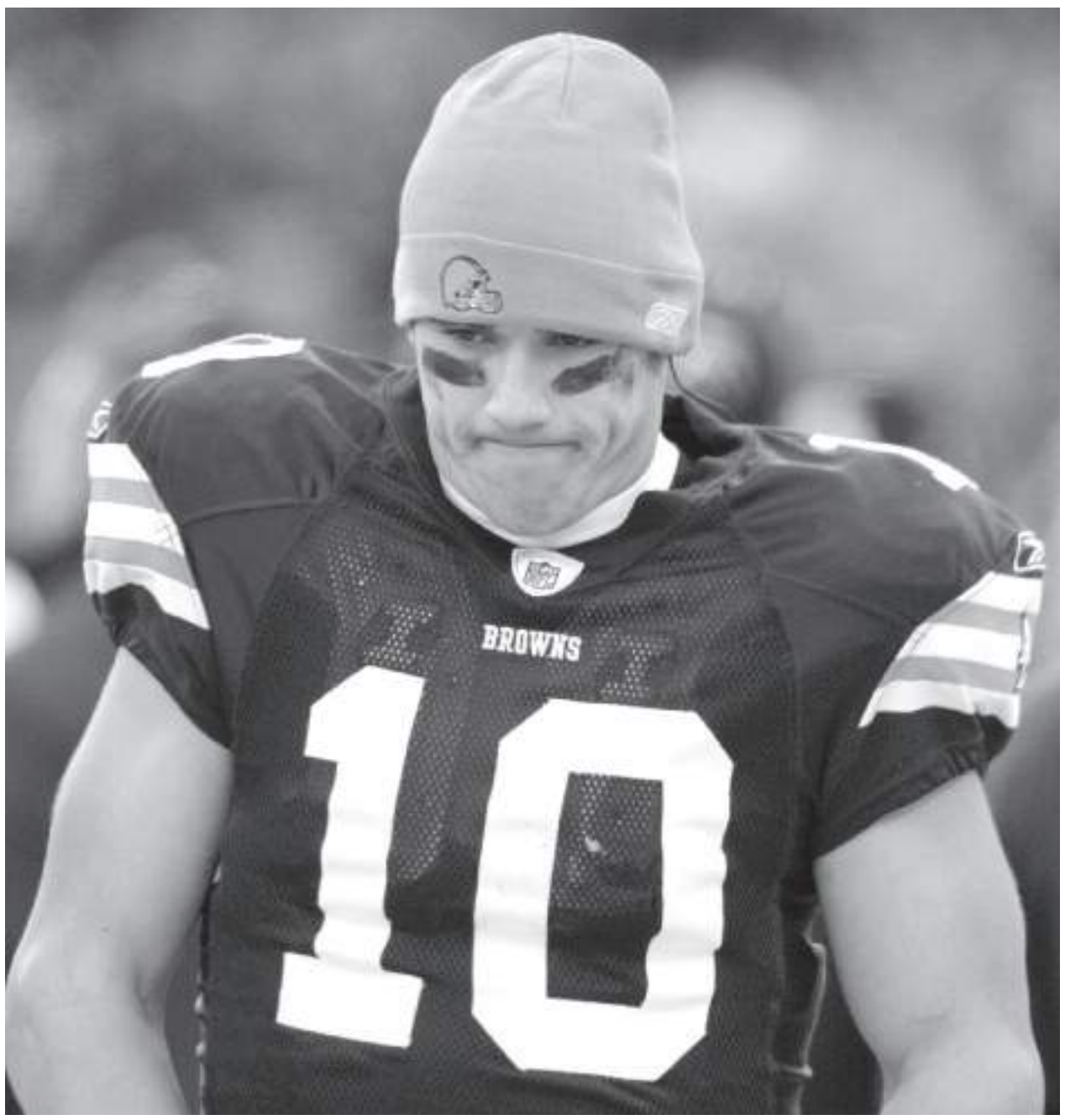
"It's frustrating," said the former Notre Dame star, who broke the tip of his finger and sustained tendon damage in his second start on Nov. 17 at Buffalo. "I can't begin to tell you. I'm hurting right now because I love to play the game. I wish I could be with my teammates. I feel bad for the fans because I really wanted to be out there and continue to play and continue to grow in this league.

"Hopefully, this will allow me to grow stronger and something good will come from this."

With Quinn out, Derek Anderson is back as Cleveland's starting QB.

But even if he leads the Browns to a 5-0 mark, Anderson's days in an orange helmet appear numbered.

In a stunning comment, Crennel, who may not be back next season, said Quinn will be his starter going into training camp in 2009.



AP

In this Nov. 23, 2008 file photo, Cleveland Browns quarterback Brady Quinn tries to keep warm on the sidelines in the third quarter of a 16-6 loss to the Houston Texans in an NFL football game in Cleveland.

"I had planned to go with Brady to be the quarterback," Crennel said. "When he comes back, he's going to be the quarterback. Quinn is the starter."

Crennel then became agitated when he was asked if he would change his mind if Anderson finished strong.

"D.A. was the starter, you guys hated him," Crennel said to reporters. "Quinn goes in and plays and now you're telling me if D.A. lights it up, you want him to be the starter. I have decided that Quinn is going to be the starter. I'm sorry if you don't like that."

Anderson lost his job to Quinn three weeks ago, when Crennel benched the Pro Bowler because of inconsistent play in the season's first eight games. Anderson played in the fourth quarter last week after Crennel benched Quinn, who threw two interceptions and was generally ineffective in a 16-6 loss to the Texans.

Before last week's game, Quinn consulted with team doctors, along with famed orthopedist Dr. James Andrews. Quinn was presented with three options: keep playing, put his finger in the splint or have surgery.

"It was a collaborative effort going into it," he said. "(Andrews) obviously talked about the course of action he wanted to take going into the game. That was something that was my decision to go ahead and play. I wanted to do the best I could to try and make the best of it."

However, when it came down to whether he would suit up or not, Quinn said he made the call.

"It was my decision in the end," he said. "It wasn't anyone else's, so it didn't matter what anyone else thought but me."

Following the game, Quinn refused to blame the injury for his poor performance—8-for-18 for 94 yards and a 21.3 passer rating—and he didn't mention anything about his tendon. However, he later said he had trouble spinning the ball and Crennel revealed the additional damage to Quinn's finger on Monday.

Quinn was asked if the finger affected his ability to throw.

"I'm not one to make excuses out there," he said. "Clearly, I wouldn't be in this position right now if it didn't affect me to some degree and that's really all I'm going to say."

Quinn's injury is just the latest episode in a tumultuous season for the Browns, who are excepted to have an equally turbulent offseason.

Crennel's job is jeopardy and general manager Phil Savage could be on thin ice after sending a profane e-mail to a fan last week. On Tuesday, owner Randy Lerner said he will wait until January before deciding the future of Crennel and Savage.

By benching Anderson earlier this season, the Browns made it clear Quinn is their future quarterback. However, they only had three games to evaluate him and now must hope they made the right pick and that his finger recovers completely. Anderson is due a $5 million roster bonus in March, making it unlikely both will be with Cleveland next season.

Crennel said he has seen enough to think Quinn, who finished 45-of-89 for 518 yards, will be a legitimate starter.

"I'm impressed with what the kid has done on the football field, off the football field, the way he handles himself in the situations that he's gone in and the way he's handle them, the way he's run the team," Crennel said. "I like the kid a lot."

NFL BRIEFS

Bush insists he's ready this time

METAIRIE, La. (AP)—Reggie Bush said he's ready to play and that he really means it this time. "I'm definitely a go this week," Bush said after Wednesday's practice, even though he did not participate fully. "I know I said that last week, but it's definitely a go this week. ... I felt great. It's the best it's felt." Bush hasn't played since tearing the meniscus in his left knee on Oct. 19 during a loss at Carolina. Because the Saints had a bye since Bush had arthroscopic surgery, he's missed only four games during what so far has been a five-week recovery. The Saints (6-5) play Tampa Bay (8-3) on Sunday. Bush practiced intermittently in the days leading up to the Saints' victories over Kansas City on Nov. 16 and Green Bay on Monday. Each week, he said he thought he'd play, but ended up being scratched from the lineup. "I didn't feel like I could be myself out there and I didn't want to hurt the team like that," Bush said. "If I'm not able to be me and be 100 percent than I'd be hurting the team." Now in his third year, Bush missed the past four games of last season with a partially torn knee ligament. This season's absence brings his total of missed games to eight in the past two seasons.

Brady says he's "doing well' in recovery

BOSTON (AP)—Tom Brady says he's doing well in his recovery from knee surgery. The New England Patriots quarterback made an unpublicized appearance Wednesday with his girlfriend, model Gisele Bundchen, at the annual Goodwill Thanksgiving dinner in Boston where they served food. He told Channel 5 that he's "doing well" more than two months after a season-ending injury to his left knee in the opener. He also said Thanksgiving is his favorite holiday. The television station's Web site, TheBostonChannel.com said Brady appeared to be walking without a limp. He had an operation for torn ligaments on Oct. 6 and subsequent surgeries after a postoperative infection developed. He has been rehabilitating this month at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough.

Rams' lineman apologizes for criticizing fans

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Richie Incognito was in the spotlight for the wrong reasons last week, criticizing the St. Louis Rams' dwindling fan base, making an obscene gesture to a TV cameraman during practice and encouraging hecklers while cupping his hands to his ears as he left Sunday's game. The day after a 27-3 home loss to the Bears, coach Jim Haslett summoned Incognito to his office. After the Rams returned to practice Wednesday, the admittedly high-strung offensive guard apologized to fans. "Coach said it's time to pay the piper," Incognito said. "You've got to go down there and make an apology, which I felt was in line. It stirred some people up, and an apology is in order." Haslett told Incognito on Monday that the Rams (2-9) "would not stand for that anymore," and he was glad to hear of the lineman's remorse. Tantrums aside, he said Incognito has been the Rams' best lineman this season. "If he said it, he was sincere, I'm sure of that," Haslett said. "The guy is a good player, and obviously he's got to control his emotions. Hopefully as he goes on in his career and (he'll) understand that part of it." Addressing the 50-50 mix of Rams' and opponents' fans at home games all this season and much of 2007, Incognito said last week Rams fans "don't know how to cheer, when to cheer." The fans booed him Sunday after a false start penalty, and took him up on his dare to boo louder as he walked toward the locker room.

Taylor thinks Jaguars career could soon be over

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP)—With his salary going up and his playing time going down, running back Fred Taylor thinks his Jacksonville Jaguars career could be nearing an end. Taylor said Wednesday he wants to play another NFL season, but realizes it might not be in the same place he spent the first 11 years of his career. "You do the math," Taylor said. "If you were on the outside looking in, you would think a change was coming." Although Taylor said his first choice would be to remain with the Jaguars, he also knows how the business side of the league works. Taylor has two years remaining on his contract and is due to make $6 million next season. Throw in coach Jack Del Rio's promise for change, and several aging veterans—most notably Taylor—are expecting to move. Linebacker Mike Peterson, center Brad Meester, left tackle Khalif Barnes, defensive end Reggie Hayward and receiver Reggie Williams also could be elsewhere in 2009. But none of them has been in Jacksonville nearly as long as Taylor. "I just want to play football," Taylor said. "This is where my heart is. Jacksonville is all I know. This isn't the last stop. It took me eight years to learn that there were 31 other teams in the NFL. I've always been afraid to get cut, be released, all of that. How come you think I'm still here? I never ever wanted to go into free agency."

Roach: Hoya is not going to last

BOXING

LOS ANGELES—All that talk about Oscar De La Hoya hedging on his retirement plans and possibly signing up for another megabuck bout? Forget about it.

As far as Freddie Roach is concerned, Manny Pacquiao is going to knock boxing's acknowledged Golden Boy to retirement. The venue? At the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, where the "Dream Match" between two of the sport's biggest names slug it out on Dec. 6.

And after Pacquiao's done with De La Hoya, it's off to London to battle the beer-guzzling light welterweight king Ricky Hatton.

"I think this is Oscar's last fight," said the two-time trainer of the year Tuesday evening.

Roach even laughed off the suggestion that De La Hoya might want to face Hatton, who is coming off a successful title defense against Paul Malignaggi, next. "You're knocked out by Pacquiao, it's over."

And Roach doesn't see the fight ending any other way.

"I don't know if I'm crazy or not but I'm still confident that there's no way we're going to lose this fight," Roach said. "(Oscar) is not going to last."

In fact, Roach plans to put De La Hoya out of his misery early by taking advantage of the Filipino ring icon's ability to pummel opponents with relentless pressure.

"(I told Manny that) in the first round, I want you to go out there and make (De La Hoya) feel that it's a f**king fight right away," Roach revealed. "A lot of people tell me that if Manny's past four, he's okay. (But) if you give Oscar De La Hoya momentum, he's going to grow (stronger).

"(De la Hoya is) a very skittish person. If you take it to him right away, I think he'll fold. He's mentally not strong."

Roach's boldest statement yet on the fight seems more than just hot air. The American trainer, largely credited for shaping Pacquiao into the world's best pound-for-pound fighter, is basing his pronouncement on a confluence of factors.

For starters, Pacquiao—despite being four pounds over the limit—has been putting together an impressive training at the Wild Card gym here, flooring sparmates left and right. Then there are reports from Roach's "spies" that De La Hoya is struggling over at Big Bear, where the six-division champ trains.

De La Hoya, Roach said, was severely tested by former Pacquiao sparmate Victor Ortiz in training. Also, De La Hoya, in an effort to make sure he makes the welterweight limit of 147 lbs, has been forced to train at 146 for quite some time now.

"For him to maintain that weight for a long period of time, I feel he'll be as weak as a kitten come fight time," Roach said, adding that fighters normally cut excess poundage over the last two days before the weigh-in.

Even De La Hoya's fight plan has been leaking out, courtesy of Roach's insiders.

"I know (De La Hoya trainer) Nacho (Beristain) is looking for the uppercut," said the bespectacled trainer. "He also wants to establish his jab and the hook off the jab."

"Manny'll get hit once in a while because he's aggressive," said Roach, whose confidence stems from watching De La Hoya's win over Steve Forbes. "If Forbes can hit him that easily, Manny Pacquiao can do a lot of damage in my opinion."

Pacquiao, on the other hand, is expected to try and find his way past De La Hoya's jabs and work on the body before going for the kill.

"It's not a f**king secret that he's got a good jab and we got to get inside the jab," said Roach. "And if you get inside the jab, where you gonna work? Of course, the body."

Meanwhile, Roach reiterated that Pacquiao is no longer going to defend his lightweight crown. Pacquiao struggled to make the weight when he fought David Diaz and wrested the American's WBC lightweight title. After needing to shed off two pounds to make the weight, Roach said the Filipino boxing hero made it clear he was moving up in weight. ***(PDI)***

SGA December Ace this Sunday

Saipan Golfers Association will hold its final monthly competition Sunday at the Marianas Country Club.

Club secretary Larry Guerrero said the SGA December Ace of the Month Tournament will have a tee off time of 9:30am following a check-in time of 8:30am.

The winner of the December Ace will join the 11 other monthly champion for 2008 for the yearend SGA Ace of Aces Tournament.

The list includes Mariano Fajardo (January), Jose I. Sablan (February), Norita (March), Larry I. Deleon Guerrero (April), Carl Hocog (May), former Superior Court presiding judge Edward Manibusan (June), Nobert Sablan (July), Hodges (August), Art Deleon Guerrero (September), Steve Balakrishna (October), and Joe Demapan (November).

For more information about this weekend's SGA December Ace of the Month Tournament, contact SGA president Martin Sablan at 483-6278, vice president John Takai at 484-3045, secretary Larry Guerrero at 287-1052, or tournament coordinator Mariano Fajardo at 483-2549. ***(Mark Rabago)***

ELI

From Page 36

"I am getting ready for the race around 4am, when I got a call from the hospital. The operation finished past 6am and when I and Tom (Linden) went to Lower Base, the runners were gone," Torgeson.

Despite being left behind, Torgeon and Linden decided to run from Lower Base to Mt. Tapochao last year, caught up with half of the participants and still finished the race ahead of several runners.

"I think in 2007, I finished a few minutes behind my time today. This was a tough race, as there were several climbs. It was fun to finally join the race as an official runner and win," Torgeson said.

Torgeson and three other male runners were lucky to finish the race before it rained.

Linden was among them, finishing third overall with a time of 42:00. Jack Kabriel placed second, clocking in at a minute earlier than Linden.

Heavy rains between 7:30am to 8am started slowing runners down with Mamiko Oshima-Berger, the first female finisher, crossing the finish line soaking wet. She timed in at 44:09.

Despite running in rain, Oshima-Berger was able to shatter her 2006 mark of 45:29.

Middle distance runner Angelo Jones came in also drenched about six minutes later, clocking in at 50:23 to become the first youth finisher.

Half of the 115 participants had already made it at the peak when it rained again. Most of the runners came in packs, encouraging each other to continue running in muddy and slippery course. The last finisher completed the race a few minutes before 9am.

The top finishers in each age group were awarded with either roasted turkey or chicken. The list include Jodel and Federico Fernandez (17-and-under), Angelo Jones and Gabrielle Race (12-and-under), Steven Pixley (50-and-above), Nikki Gabaldon (30-39 age group), Erick Frink (1:04:45), and Monica Yamaguchi (52:36).

All finishers received T-shirts from Rep. Ed Salas, who has been a regular supporter of the Turkey Trot.

WHITE

From Page 36

briefing made by NC2011 president Pascale Bastien-Thiry, NC2011 protocol director Helen Court Wabete, and Pacific Games Council secretary general David Boyd, White also said that the New Caledonia organizing committee may also help the CNMI out by enlisting its flag carrier, Air Caledonie, to arrange charter flights to the region.

The Commonwealth sports body's head also extended his thanks to Bastien-Thiry, Wabete, and Boyd for flying all to way to the North Pacific to discuss their plans for the 2011 Pacific Games not only with NMASA but also to the sports governing bodies of Guam and Palau as well.

"I was very pleased that officials of NC2011 took the time and expense of traveling all the way to the CNMI to brief us on preparations for the 2011 Pacific Games. New Caledonia has shown that it has the capability and will to put on a truly outstanding event," he said.

NC2011 will organize 12 compulsory sports in the 2011 Games, namely athletics, weightlifting, swimming, basketball, table tennis, soccer, tennis, rugby, golf, vaa, volleyball, and badminton.

In addition, NC2011 will also host 18 optional sports that would be determined by the number of entries.

NC2011 expects all 22 countries of the Pacific Games Council to take part in the Games. It also looks forward to hosting 3,500 athletes—5,000 including officials—in three years time.

The organizing committee is also prepared to spend about $16 million for the hosting of the Games. That price tag does not include the construction of 38 venues and sporting facilities for the 15 days of competition.

EVENFLOW

From Page 36

In the third set, Evenflow was still hot, notching a 16-2 win. Evenflow capped the game with a 16-2 victory in the fourth set.

J.R. Gechig was the game's heaviest hitter with 25 points, making seven aces, two xunks, two kees, and a goal.

Fourteen aces, four xunks, five kees, and a goal were scored in the Evenflow-Soul Rebels tiff.

Evenflow also played Monday night and posted similar juiced-out triumph against Islanders, 57-45.

Evenflow won three sets of the four-set match, bowing to the Islanders only in the third set.

The first set was a close battle with Evenflow escaping with a three-point win, 17-14.

Evenflow started pulling away in the second set recording an 18-8 victory for a 35-22 lead.

But the Islanders refused to give up bouncing back in the third set with a 15-6 victory. After three sets, the Islanders moved within four, 37-41, and must win by five points in the fourth set to steal the game.

A 16-8 victory in the fourth set allowed Evenflow to keep the win and remain undefeated in the second round.

Twelve aces, one xunk, 10 kees, and two goals were recorded in the game.

Dean Matthew and Gechig had one goal apiece, and the latter led Evenflow with 13 points on three aces and two kees.

In Tuesday's game, Fanians walked away with a 75-40 victory over the Naturals.

Fanians won all four sets with Rex Jose and Jazz Roscow emerging as the game's heaviest hitters with 13 points each. Jose made four kees, one ace, and one goal, while Roscow had similar performance. Larry Sharry added 10 points on four aces and a xunx.

Fanians won the first set by nine points, 15-6, and had another nine-point triumph in the second, 22-13.

Naturals played its best game in the third set, losing by only seven, 18-11. Fanians completed a shutout win with a 20-10 victory.

DOLPHINS

From Page 36

game losing skid and improved their record to 3-3. Southern still leads the league with a 4-1 slate.

The Dolphins were off to a jackrabbit start, leading at 22-4, after the first period.

Crisostimo anchored MHS' good start, firing eight points in the first period, while Norman Chan and Greg Duatin chipped in four apiece.

Mark Palacios and Reinhold Ferrer were the only two players who scored for Southern in the first period.

The Rays picked up the scoring in the second period with Ecalnea nailing eight points. But Duatin was there to keep the Dolphins' big lead, scoring nine in the second quarter, which ended with MHS ahead by 19, 42-23.

The Rays launched repeated comeback bids in the second half, but the Dolphins always found ways to widen the gap and preserve the win.

Crisostimo and Sula topscored for MHS with 16 points apiece, while Chan contributed 11.

Ecalnea led all scorers with 28 points, while Melvin Cadiang added 11.

MHS 71—Sula 16, Crisostimo 16, Chan 11, Duatin 8, Manalili 8, Sarmiento 6, Feria 3, Liberato 2, Hidalgo 2.

SSHA 70—Ecalnea 28, Cadiang 11, Salem 8, Wesley 8, A. Palacios 7, M. Palacios 4, Ferrer 2.

Scoring by quarters: 22-4, 42-23, 56-53, 71-70.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	14	2	.875	_
New Jersey	7	7	.500	6
Toronto	7	7	.500	6
New York	7	8	.467	6 1/2
Philadelphia	7	8	.467	6 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	11	4	.733	_
Atlanta	9	5	.643	1 1/2
Miami	7	8	.467	4
Charlotte	4	10	.286	6 1/2
Washington	2	10	.167	7 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	12	3	.800	_
Detroit	9	5	.643	2 1/2
Chicago	7	9	.438	5 1/2
Indiana	6	8	.429	5 1/2
Milwaukee	7	10	.412	6

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Houston	10	6	.625	_
New Orleans	8	5	.615	1/2
San Antonio	8	6	.571	1
Dallas	7	7	.500	2
Memphis	4	11	.267	5 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	10	5	.667	_
Portland	10	6	.625	1/2
Utah	10	6	.625	1/2
Minnesota	3	10	.231	6
Oklahoma City	1	15	.063	9 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	12	1	.923	_
Phoenix	11	5	.688	2 1/2
Golden State	5	10	.333	8
Sacramento	5	12	.294	9
L.A. Clippers	2	13	.133	11

Yesterday's Games

Atlanta 102, Milwaukee 96
Toronto 93, Charlotte 86
Cleveland 117, Oklahoma City 82
Orlando 96, Philadelphia 94
Boston 119, Golden State 111
Phoenix 110, Minnesota 102
Detroit 110, New York 96
Indiana 91, Houston 90
San Antonio 98, Chicago 88
Utah 117, Memphis 100
Portland 106, Miami 68
New Jersey 116, Sacramento 114, OT
Denver 106, L.A. Clippers 105

By The Associated Press

2008 Annual Turkey Trot Run

Photos by ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The top finishers in various age groups show their prizes and medals. Joining them is NMA secretary general Robin Sapong, left.

Mamiko Oshima was the first female finisher of the 2008 Annual Turkey Trot Run, crossing the finish line up Mt. Tapochao in 44:09.

Eli Torgeson topped the 2008 Annual Turkey Trot Run early yesterday morning with a time of 34:20.

First youth finisher Angelo Jones completed the race in 50:23.

Rob Schultz, right, finishes the race ahead of wife Brenda, left.

Michael Johnson nears the finish line.

Jeff Race, right, finishes the race early, but went down the course to run alongside his daughter Gabrielle, second left.

Chris Nelson, left, and a youth runner sprint up to the finish line.

Jack Sharer, right, runs along Haoting Romolor. Chasing them is Jack's father, Dirk.

Department of Public Health Director Richard Brostrom leads a pack of runners.

Roach: Hoya is not going to last

All that talk about Oscar De La Hoya hedging on his retirement plans and possibly signing up for another megabuck bout? Forget about it.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Rondo, Celtics rally to beat Warriors

Ray Allen scored 25 points and Rajon Rondo had a season-high 22 as the Boston Celtics overcame a 14-point, third-quarter deficit.

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Eli, Mamiko top Turkey Trot

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Eli Torgeson joined the 2008 Annual Turkey Trot Fun Run officially and was first to reach the peak of Mt. Tapochao yesterday.

Torgeson completed the 4.2-mile race in a blistering 34 minutes, 20 seconds eclipsing Stuart Smith's time of 36:46 in 2006.

The Commonwealth Health Center's anesthesiologist missed the 2007 edition of the annual race as an official runner, as he failed to join other participants at the starting line in Lower Base.

See ELI on Page 34

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Participants and volunteers for the 2008 Annual Turkey Trot Run pose for a group photo after the race at Mt. Tapochao. A total of 115 participants took part in the event.

White hopes to send large delegation for 2011 Games

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Unlike the 2007 Pacific Games in Samoa, the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association hopes to send a large contingent to the 2011 edition of the quadrennial event in New Caledonia.

NMASA president Michael A. White in a email to the *Saipan Tribune* noted that the CNMI stands a good chance to better the five-team delegation it sent to Apia last year in the Noumea Games three years from now.

White

"Cost is always a factor. However, travel and per diem costs for the Noumea Games will be significantly less than they were for Samoa in 2007 or the Cook Islands next year, so I am hopeful that we will be able to send a large delegation to represent the CNMI," he said.

In the 2007 Pacific Games in Apia, the CNMI sent five athletes—Tyrone Omar of athletics and beach volleyball players Mark McDonald, Tyce Mister, Nina Mosley, and Melissa Hallaby.

During the last Nov. 19

See WHITE on Page 34

Dolphins hand Rays first loss

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Undefeated no more.

Marianas High School pulled off a 71-70 win over Saipan Southern High School in the 2008-2009 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Basketball League Tuesday night at the MHS Gymnasium to hand the Rays their first loss of the season.

The Rays swept the first round of a three-round regular season, won their first game in the second round, before bowing to the Dolphins.

The Dolphins led by as much as 21 points in the first half, 42-21, but the Rays worked their way back into the game in the third period before losing steam in the final canto.

Baskets from Tim Sula, Romulo Sarmiento, and Jack Crisostimo in the fourth quarter allowed the Dolphins to withstand the Rays' rally.

A 14-point explosion from Tristan Ecalnea in the third quarter move Southern within three, 53-56, entering the fourth period.

Ecalnea continued to lead the Rays recovery, until Sula, Sarmiento, and Crisostimo's timely baskets thwarted Southern's repeated comeback bids.

The win ended the Dolphins' two-

See DOLPHINS on Page 34

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MHS' Eddie Manalili, 22, challenges the defense of Mt. Carmel's Geza Baka during their game in the MISO caging last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. The Dolphins lost, but recovered against Southern Tuesday night with a 71-70 win.

Evenflow surges to second straight victory

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Evenflow is on a roll at the start of the second round of the 2008-2009 World Organized Rocball Community League at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The defending champions won two games in three straight playing days to boost its semifinals bid.

The second round of the Rocball league started Monday night with only nine teams left after three were eliminated. The nine remaining squads play in a round-robin second round with the top four advancing to the semifinals.

Evenflow is now 2-0 in the second round after beating the Islanders and Soul Rebels.

The defending champion collided with the Soul Rebels Wednesday night with Evenflow nailing a juiced-out 61-18 win.

Evenflow lost only the first set, 13-15, and swept the last three to foil the Soul Rebels' bid for an upset.

The defending champions started dominating the game in the second set, cruising to a 16-0 triumph.

See EVENFLOW on Page 34

Evenflow's Tito Francisco goes for a kee against the Soul Rebels during their game in the second round of the 2008-2009 World Organized Rocball Community League Wednesday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO